



UNIVERSAL  
LIBRARY



125 427

UNIVERSAL  
LIBRARY











AUDACIOUS ANGLES  
ON CHINA







# AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

BY  
ELSIE McCORMICK



D. APPLETON AND COMPANY  
NEW YORK :: 1923 :: LONDON

COPYRIGHT, 1923, BY  
D. APPLETON AND COMPANY

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA



*Affectionately dedicated to Ruth Benedict  
and Mary Markham in commemoration of  
our Shanghai "Menagerie."*



## PREFACE

*This book on life in the Far East is not offered as the work of a sinologue. It presents the panorama of life in China as seen by a resident rather than by a tourist. Incidentally, the funny side of the Orient is much more conspicuous to the average dweller there than is that element of mystery usually emphasized in plays and stories produced at home.*

*The new interest in China aroused since the war and the steady growth of foreign colonies even in cities of the interior have led many to speculate about the conditions of life awaiting the new-comer in the East. There are few people at home who have not a friend living in China or contemplating going, and this little book is meant to answer some of their questions regarding the ups and downs of dwelling in the Orient.*

THE AUTHOR



# CONTENTS

## PART I

### AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. WHY DID WE COME? . . . . .	3
II. A LYRIC OF THE TRAMS . . . . .	8
III. WHERE CREDIT IS ALWAYS GOOD . . . . .	13
IV. THE BEGGING BUSINESS . . . . .	20
V. THE WILES OF THE CHINESE CHAUF- FEUR . . . . .	26
VI. PROPER CHINESE CUSTOM . . . . .	32
VII. THE CITY OF TWINKLING TOES . . . . .	38
VIII. SUICIDE AS A POPULAR PASTIME . . . . .	44
IX. WHY IS A RICKSHA? . . . . .	50
X. SCRAMBLED MILLINERY . . . . .	56
XI. BOATS IN FIFTY-SEVEN VARIETIES . . . . .	61
XII. UNMIXING THE MIXED COURT . . . . .	66
XIII. TRAIN VAUDEVILLE . . . . .	74
XIV. FACE CONSERVATION AS A NATIONAL INDUSTRY . . . . .	78

# CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
XV. LUGGAGE MYSTERIES . . . . .	85
XVI. NOBODY LOVES A CHINESE TAILOR . . . . .	90
XVII. THE TROUBLES OF SHANGHAI ROMEOs . . . . .	95
XVIII. SEE THE CHINESE BIRDIES . . . . .	100
XIX. WINTERING IN THE FAR EAST . . . . .	105
XX. THE JADE CRAZE . . . . .	110
XXI. PIDGIN ENGLISH AS A LIBERAL EDUCATION . . . . .	115
XXII. CHINA'S SKYSCRAPERS . . . . .	122
XXIII. CHINESE JAZZ . . . . .	128
XXIV. THE UPS AND DOWNS OF SUMMER TRAVEL . . . . .	135
XXV. ENTER THE SING-SONG GIRL . . . . .	140
XXVI. IS LIFE IN CHINA WORTH WHILE? . . . . .	148
XXVII. CHINA'S GOD OF CHANCE . . . . .	156
XXVIII. CALLING CUSTOMS IN THE FAR EAST . . . . .	162
XXIX. HABITS OF CHINESE GHOSTS . . . . .	168
XXX. THIS POOR LITTLE BOY HAD A HAPPY XMAS AFTER ALL . . . . .	173
XXXI. SANTA CLAUS IN THE ORIENT . . . . .	179
XXXII. A VIGNETTE OF SOOCHOW . . . . .	185
XXXIII. THE OPIUM GAME . . . . .	192
XXXIV. CONFUCIUS, CHINA'S GREAT SAGE . . . . .	200

# CONTENTS

---

## PART II

### THE UNEXPURGATED DIARY OF A SHANGHAI BABY

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. "HOME, SWEET HOME"—CALLING ON SINZA ROAD—AMAH STAGES A FU- NERAL . . . . .	209
II. FAMILY LIFE ON SUNDAY AFTERNOON —FIRST BATTLE IN NIPPON-BABY WAR —THE MYSTERY OF THE SHATTERED CHINA . . . . .	219
III. BABY CAN'T STAND THE SOCIAL PACE —BEING KISSED BY COMPANY—THE ELUSIVE BACHELOR . . . . .	228
IV. ART AS SHE IS DAUBED—INDICATIONS OF GENTLE SPRING—WHY CÆSAR CROSSED THE RUBICON . . . . .	237
V. PREPARATION FOR A DINNER PARTY— DIPLOMATIC HOUSEBOY GETS A LINE ON TAIPAN'S DINNER CLOTHES . . .	244
VI. THE CARLTON AND PROPOSALS—PAPA TRIES GOING IN A POOL—AUNTIE HAS IDEA FOR SAFE AND SANE BET . . .	249
VII. CUCUMBERS AND THE SPRING MEET— THE PLEASURES OF HOUSE-BOATING— JAP BABY SPRINGS NEW ACCOMPLISH- MENT . . . . .	256
VIII. LIFE OF INFANT IN SHANGHAI ONE ROUND OF FRIDAY THE THIRTEENTH—	

# CONTENTS

---

CHAPTER	PAGE
NEW HOPES FOR THE JESSFIELD MON- KEY HOUSE . . . . .	264
IX. BABY IS INTRODUCED TO MR. HENLI REGATTA—PEANUTS AS AN INFANT DIET . . . . .	273
X. FURTHER REPORTS OF THE HENLI REGATTA—THE ADVANTAGES OF BAM- BOO DRAGONS—ANOTHER ENCOUNTER WITH JAP BABY . . . . .	280
XI. ECONOMICAL PHASES OF THE DINNER DANCE—THE MOSQUITO MASSAGE— AN INDOOR SPORT . . . . .	289
XII. BABY IS INTRODUCED TO THE FLY SEA- SON—THE CLOTHES SOVIET IN SHANG- HAI . . . . .	296
XIII. THE SHANGHAI BABY RETURNS TO AMERICA . . . . .	302
GLOSSARY . . . . .	304



# ILLUSTRATIONS

A Chinese version of Tom Sawyer . . . . .	<i>Facing page</i> <i>Frontispiece</i>
China's threshing machines . . . . .	52
Coolies are cheaper than horses and almost as strong . . . . .	52
Young China dresses up for a party . . . . .	108
The nonreversible baby-basket is not always fully appreciated . . . . .	108
The pagoda, built originally in India, has become a characteristic of Chinese landscape . . . . .	122
The blue-tiled Temple of Heaven is one of the most beautiful legacies of the Empire . . . . .	122
Only an imaginative Chinese poet could call the Buddhist music "heavenly" . . . . .	132
A brass band rendition of "A Hot Time in the Old Town To-night" is part of every well-regulated funeral . . . . .	132
Peking carts are the chief reason why travelers should carry arnica . . . . .	136
House boating on Chinese canals is a favorite tourist sport . . . . .	136
The grave of Confucius, a goal of pilgrimage for nearly twenty-five hundred years . . . . .	200
Amah's friends all live on Chinese boulevards . . . . .	256



# PART I



## I. WHY DID WE COME?

THERE'S a song they always sing at home just shortly before the party breaks up. When the after-dinner speeches are over and forgotten, when the formality of the early evening has given way to a comfortable leaning back in chairs, and when at last there comes a lull in the story telling, somebody always begins:

"We're here because we're here because we're here because we're here—," and so on, up to the eighth decimal place.

It seems to us, somehow, that the song has a peculiar bearing in the Far East. Why do Americans come to China anyway? The early days when the population consisted chiefly of two classes—those who came over as missionaries and those who didn't dare to go back—are almost forgotten now. Though the remittance man and the gentleman who fears a reception committee headed by the sheriff are not entirely unknown in China, they occupy a comparatively small place on the social canvas. Neither are they much given to advertising themselves, for with the passing of the old

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

swashbuckling days has gone any tendency to grow reminiscent over jail sentences at home.

The most important census expander in the Orient is the love of the open sea which the Germans designate as wanderlust. It is astonishing how large a proportion of the city's foreign population is under thirty-five years of age and how many, among the Americans at least, come from small country towns. Evidently the lure of the long, long trail is more tantalizing to residents of Elmville Center than to those who dwell in the shadow of the smokestacks and were brought up on the belief that milk is a liquid form of chalk distilled in a bottle. We have no figures to prove it, but we are willing to hazard a guess that there are more former Kansas residents in China than there are immigrants from New York.

The question of the feminine invasion has a few different angles to it. Wanderlust has no masculine patent on it, of course, and the call of the world's far places may be heard under a georgette hat as well as under a derby. The only reason why men did most of the adventuring in the past was because the women were ensconced behind walls four feet thick with a moat around

## WHY DID WE COME?

---

them. 'Even in spite of these handicaps, it is on record that more than one gentle layde dressed as a page and began a little Cook's Tour of her own in the wake of some doughty knight.

In this present era, when the walls have been leveled by general consent, when pirates have all taken positions as understewards on steamers, and when the world is open to any one who can unlock it with a ticket, the woman wanderluster has come into her own. Members of the tribe work for a time in Shanghai, take a dip down to Manila, and are next heard from in Java or Peking. They create their own seasons by going South to avoid the winter and traveling North to escape the summer.

Usually the feminine wanderer who seeks adventure without becoming an adventuress is a typist, or office secretary. She flits from position to position, dodging a long-term contract as she would a brickbat, never unpacking her trunk to the bottom, reading steamer schedules with more interest than most people do the comic section, and blithely tripping through all the social life possible in each new habitat. Though she is rarely the type that sleeps with a guidebook under the pillow, she usually absorbs more or less uncon-

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

sciously the local color of her various homes and painlessly adds to her education.

There are other reasons for the feminine exodus to the East. Some, of course, come in response to an invitation that involves a search for a minister in Yokohama. Others come from the same general motive, but with reverse English. The number of young ladies in the Orient who are heroines of broken engagements at home is really astonishing. To the person who has never left her own continent, a trip to China is equivalent to jumping off the rim of the planet. Incidentally it may be noted that those who come to forget succeed admirably, jazzing toes and broken hearts not being able to dwell together long in the same body.

Having indicated some of the reasons why Americans come to the Far East, the next question to arise is, "Why do they stay?" Practically everybody detests China for the first month and many continue to hate it through the first year. After that, although they continue to excoriate the plumbing, the lack of central heating, the high price of imported goods, and similar flies in the jam, it is noticeable that they continue to stay despite the fact that steamers sail for home on an average of once a week.



## WHY DID WE COME?

---

Whether the lure of the East is a mystic potent compounded of arched bridges, moon gates, and the resonance of temple bells, or whether it is composed of such practical ingredients as plenty of servants, a spirited social life, and the advantage of being a large frog in a small puddle is more than we shall essay to answer. There are some who claim that the Orient forces all who stay more than a few months on its shores to eat a magic lotus and there are others of a more cynical turn of mind who say that the call of the East is "Boy"!

Perhaps, after all, we cannot hope to sum it up more definitely than the convivial song of political banquets and college parties at home.

"We're here because we're here because we're here because we're here"—which is quite accurate enough for all practical purposes.

## II. A LYRIC OF THE TRAMS

RIDING in a Shanghai tram seems to require a brief for the defendant. At least, the friends whom we meet usually explain that the car had gasoline in its carburetor or something and therefore it couldn't be used. We always tell them that our ricksha man didn't come that morning. As a matter of fact, he didn't. Nor the morning before that. Being a lowly scribe without even a typewriter we call our own, we haven't got a ricksha. But most of our friends haven't cars either, so we start at scratch.

The first procedure of a person taking a tram ride in Shanghai is to begin to walk. He walks until he comes to the first "Fare Section" sign, and then halts firmly under it with the glowing conviction of having saved three cents. Maskee if he—or she, as it may be and frequently is—wastes three dollars or so later in the afternoon on cocktails he didn't want or a lace collar she didn't need. Almost invariably the Shanghai resident ambles on to the "Fare Section" sign if one occurs between him and his destination.

## A LYRIC OF THE TRAMS

---

Then, having saved three coppers, read all the signs on adjacent billboards, and shooed off a dozen assorted ricksha men who drop the shafts of their conveyances on his toes as they plead for custom, the resident approaches a halting car and places his foot on the lower step. Shanghai cars being skittish by nature and accustomed to shying at strangers, the would-be passenger mustn't be surprised if the public carrier suddenly kicks up its heels and starts off down Nanking Road. This leaves him the alternative of trying to clutch the step with his toes, monkey-wise, and swing the other foot aboard, or unload his foot from the rail and run the chance of sitting down in the street in an unlovely position. Men usually try to swing aboard; women, especially if they are wearing narrow skirts generally step off the wrong way, do a few movements from Pavlowa's "Return of Spring," and then try to give the grinning battalion of ricksha coolies and others the impression that they didn't really want that car, anyway.

If he or she did succeed in catching the car—you literally have to catch it in Shanghai—the next movement of the traffic sonata is to enter and try to find a seat. We will say this for the men

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

of Shanghai—after having hatpinned our way through the New York subway rush, traded elbow jabs with the Paris elite in the Metro, and shared a strap in a Tokio tram with half a dozen California Delights, the courtesy of the men in this city is as welcome as an ice-cream freezer in the Gobi Desert. Rarely indeed does a foreign woman have to stand for more than a block, and the ostrich brigade that hides its heads behind newspapers so that it won't see the swaying lady is busy fulfilling engagements elsewhere.

Sooner or later during the course of the journey, the Chinese conductor appears. Sometimes, if the car is crowded, he overlooks part of his clientele. One can pick out the ones he has overlooked by the fact that they wear a self-conscious expression and by the glimpse of brown coppers held in a clenched hand.

When the conductor reappears they make feeble gestures with the hand holding the money, but they don't exactly force it upon him. If he passes on without collecting they subside and begin to take a deep interest in the scenery out the window. Others who seem self-conscious are those who are planning to ride a block beyond the fare sec-

## A LYRIC OF THE TRAMS

---

tion, but do not look kindly on the additional tariff and the people who chew up or otherwise dispose of their fare receipt before the arrival of the inspector.

Chinese tramcars differ from the American variety in many particulars. In the first place, we miss the row of current literature showing pictures of a young lady clasped in a suitor's arms, with the face cream that was responsible for the event pictured modestly in a corner. We miss the Arrow Collar man and the advice to own our own home. We miss, too, the conductor, who told us to step lively and remarked that there was plenty of room up front. And last but not least, we miss the row of Wrigley addicts across the aisle who chewed in unison and with such perfect rhythm that one instinctively looked around for an orchestra leader with a baton.

Though we miss much we are nevertheless the recipients of various blessings. Ladies and gentlemen, we have with us this morning and every other, the misplaced coolie with a duck in a basket who was looking for third class, the Japanese gentleman who bends around so as to occupy two seats when the car is crowded, the new arrival

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

who tries to use his fare receipt as a transfer, and the lady who tells all the personal affairs of other ladies to a friend across the car.

Here's to the Shanghai tramcar. Long may she bounce!

Fares can do!

### III. WHERE CREDIT IS ALWAYS GOOD

OUTSIDE of a few palm-thatched villages on the rim of a far-away Pacific Island or a kraal in Central Africa that has not yet learned the commercial wiles of the white man, Shanghai is perhaps the most trusting city in the world. Certainly no other town of its size places the same childlike confidence in the honesty of its inhabitants, this trait being particularly surprising when one considers the floating elements of which its population is made. Shanghai boasts of being ultra-sophisticated, yet its attitude toward financial matters is that of a gentleman in a lava-lava guilelessly offering an island or two in return for a gas range with no connection.

Take the matter of the chit. Who in his wildest flights of fancy could picture a stranger entering a restaurant in New York and offering for his dinner a name on a scrap of paper torn from a menu card? A gentleman unknown to the proprietor who confessed that he had only some keys and unposted letters in his pocket would make an

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

informal exit on his ear if the restaurant were on the lower East Side, or would be constrained to hand over a piece of jewelry as a deposit, if the eating palace happened to be situated in a more peace-loving neighborhood. His only possibility of buying a dinner with a bit of paper would involve the previous acquisition of a month's meal card, paid for in advance.

There are just a few places that are attempting to show a timid and palpitating trust in the human species. Over in the banlieus of Greenwich Village is a little French restaurant where girls from New York University, with glints of safety pins revealing the hasty marriage of waist and skirt meet youths with polka dot ties and profuse complexes, and where lady artists in smocks or lady writers with ink-stained fingers keep up the reputation of the place for Bohemianism.

In this little shop, no checks are issued, patrons being trusted to go to the counter and whisper the extent of their indulgence to the fat proprietress. But there are numerous hovering waiters and one can't help suspect that Pierre out in the kitchen keeps a record of what he issues and transfers it by some Marconi system of his own to Madame behind the French pastry.



## WHERE CREDIT IS ALWAYS GOOD

In Shanghai, however, a person may enter practically any restaurant or café and merely inscribe his name and address on a piece of paper at the conclusion of the festivities. The boy who receives the chit has no means of checking up the statistics on it, nor does he ever attempt to do so. He simply files away the memorandum and trusts to the various joss that the signer of it will not feel urged to board any of the numerous trains or boats leaving the city before the first of the month.

The same system applies to automobiles. Again taking New York as an example, can any one imagine offering a Manhattan taxicab driver a specimen of his autograph in return for a trip to One Hundred and Thirty-seventh Street? The taxi man, who probably belonged to the Gas-House Gang before his first term in the Reform School, would merely take a leaf from his old brass knuckle days and make a few radical changes in his passenger's physiognomy. In Shanghai, however, any one can take a car any distance and pay for it by a flourish of the pen which may or may not inscribe his right name. Occasionally one reads of people who leave town with taxi bills as long as a boa constrictor, but local garages re-

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

port that as a rule people respond with surprising fidelity to the amount of trust shown.

A similar ingenuousness is observable in the attitude toward checks. Practically every store in the city exhibits an astonishing willingness to accept checks from complete strangers and allow them to walk away with their goods. Larger establishments can start legal machinery to trace thefts, but the same compliance is shown by small Chinese shops where the clerk is unable to read the strange foreign characters and which would have no possible way of rediscovering the errant purchaser. In New York, the person who presents a check even to a bank must stand by while the cashier does everything with it but taste it, interspersing his study with looks that give the humble presenter ten years for forgery. In the end he usually returns it, instructing the owner to come back with two legal witnesses, a rent receipt, and his vaccination certificate.

Even the ricksha reflects the popular trust. As a rule no bargaining is concluded before the ride. The ricksha man delivers a commodity which he cannot take back in the event of being dissatisfied with the price, and he has practically no way of redress save verbal excoriation, which

## WHERE CREDIT IS ALWAYS GOOD

loses its effect as soon as the erstwhile passenger closes the door. The ricksha coolie is absolutely at the mercy of his customer's sense of fair play—a significant contrast to the "Pay as You Enter" box that unflinchingly blocks the way of any one riding in the ricksha's counterpart at home.

The genesis of the chit system was written in the early days of foreign penetration, when the coin of the realm consisted of cash built on lines similar to a doughnut and silver "sycee" constructed on the model of a small coal scuttle. As it requires ten cash to make one cent, a shopper attempting to buy a new collar would be forced to enter the store followed by a wheel-barrowful of coin or decked in enough strings of it to clothe an Oriental dancer.

Pockets in foreign clothes were never built to house silver sycee, so naturally the Western community turned to less cumbersome ways of transacting business. Precedent for the chit system was found in India, where army men hard-pressed for cash postponed settling until pay day. The word itself is derived from an Indian dialect.

Development of the system was accelerated in the days when employees of foreign trading firms lived in walled "factories" and when the dangers

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

and difficulties of leaving the compound confined most of their purchasing to drinks bought on the premises. Under the circumstances it was natural enough to permit buying on credit, and the system gradually extended itself when the compound walls were leveled. It is said that in the early days there were firms that deliberately encouraged their employees to sign chits profusely, so that they would be in debt at the end of their period of service and therefore obliged to contract for another term of years.

The great disadvantage of the chit system lies in its temptation to extravagance. Few seem to realize that when they sign a chit they actually spend money, and as a result, chits shower on them at the first of the month like a stage snow-storm, most of them representing highly useless expenditures. The worldly-wise shroffs, however, are as arduous callers as ladies trying to climb into society, and the bills are, as a rule, eventually met.

Though most of the residents become so accustomed to the chit that signing it is second nature to them, the general willingness to trust all sorts and conditions of men is one of the most singular features of a far from prosaic city. Its

## **WHERE CREDIT IS ALWAYS GOOD**

---

faith in human nature is unparalleled except in dreamed-of but unrealized utopias and a few religious communities which have tried to apply their creed to economics. Will Shanghai, described by misled writers at home as the plague spot of the Far East, surprise the world by being the place for the dawn of the economic millennium?

## IV. THE BEGGING BUSINESS

IF you have ever visited the Native City of Shanghai, you have probably observed a little, gnomelike man with a face that would fit one of the beneficent elves in a fairy tale and a laugh which he might have stolen from Friar Tuck. It is doubtful if a tourist party ever wound through the streets of idols, fans, and bird cages that flank the Willow Tea House without finding that the old man had invited himself to join the group. Though he exhibits no deformities, he is reputed to be the most successful beggar in Shanghai and one of the most influential members of the Beggars' Guild.

Begging in China is an organized business with a code of ethics as rigid as that of the medical profession. The largest guild of panhandlers in Shanghai has its headquarters in the Temple of the Daughter of Heaven on North Honan Road. Here the beggar chief and his office staff tabulate reports of shops about to open, discuss terms for furnishing bearers to funeral processions, and arrange casualties for free-lance Knights of the

## THE BEGGING BUSINESS

---

Open Palm who have invaded territory occupied by the guild.

Whatever else may be said of the Chinese beggar, it must be admitted that he is not a piker. Long ago he gave up the slow process of amassing a fortune a cash at a time to turn to the more thickly petaled fields of blackmail and extortion. He still sits by the wayside or keeps pace with rickshas, of course, but this phase of his work is rapidly becoming a sideline.

Whenever a wedding, funeral or other important household event is about to occur, a representative of the guild calls on the family concerned and intimates that a little *cumsha* will be as welcome as a roast pig to a hungry ghost.

If the family obligingly comes across, a little red paper is affixed to the lintel headed by the name of the Chinese Republic and informing whoever is concerned that adequate payment has been made. If the householder replies that his personal treasury is as empty as Mother Hubbard's pantry, the feast in question will be invaded by shoals, swarms, and fleets of beggars, who enter the premises, steal food, balance furniture on their noses, sing ditties that would shock M. Rabelais, and otherwise curdle the party.

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

The merchant who opens a new shop must also cross the beggars' palms with silver if he wishes to prevent his customers from being driven away by constant annoyance. Most shops in the city set aside all the so-called beggars' cash; valued at one-twentieth of a cent, and hand them out to the mendicants' shroff on the first of each month.

The Beggars' Guild also feeds its coffers by a monopoly on the carrying privileges in wedding and funeral processions. The best man or chief mourner, as the case may be, must arrange with the beggar chief for an adequate number of bearers. If non-union mendicants are engaged, it would not require a fortune teller to predict a number of mishaps to the procession. A peculiar feature of the beggars' code is their absolute honesty in transporting elaborate wedding gifts or presents for the dead. They never betray their trust when given articles of value to carry, but if men outside the fraternity are engaged as bearers, beggars along the route will work out some remarkable problems in subtraction.

Shippers and godown keepers are also prominent on the beggars' calling list. A wharf or steamship company which pays them regular divi-



## THE BEGGING BUSINESS

---

dends will be fairly well insured against theft, but the firm which ignores them must reconcile itself to a large proportion of gashed sacks, broken crates, and damaged goods.

Two years ago the beggars of the city walked out on strike. In order to show their sympathy with the students who were agitating for an anti-Japanese boycott, both the Beggars' and Thieves' Guilds voted to refrain from their customary occupations for forty-eight hours. Though the cessation of these essential industries threatened a commercial panic in the city, Shanghai managed to bear up under the disaster until the guilds went back to work.

This is by no means the only time that the guild has shown an interest in public affairs. Several of the beggars' organizations throughout China made contributions to the Famine Relief Drive, some of which were decidedly substantial. In Tientsin, the Beggars' Guild presented a beautiful grandfather clock to a retiring official who had won their favor.

Mendicants in Shanghai range from the laughing gnome of the Native City to lachrymose individuals who daub their faces with sheep blood

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

and wail like a Chinese ghost unable to find his ancestral tablet.

There is a woman who sits fainting by the roadside while her small son fans her face, smooths her forehead, and tries to open her eyes. The first time I saw this spectacle I was decidedly touched; when I witnessed it in quite another part of town, I was considerably less so; and when, on another occasion, I saw the erstwhile fainting lady leap gayly aboard a moving street car and haul her young hopeful on behind her, my sympathy market suddenly went bankrupt.

The deformed beggars of the city hold a convention every Sunday at the gates of the Russian Church, where the worshipers evidently feel obliged to give alms. The Easter service of the Orthodox Church was held in May at midnight. Just how the beggars got hold of the church calendar is not described in the minutes, but somehow the occurrence of Russian Easter became known to the untutored pagans of beggardom, and practically every guild member in good standing was present outside the gates to assist the congregation in being charitable.

Terrible stories are told of newly born babies who are placed in an earthenware jar with only

## THE BEGGING BUSINESS

---

their heads protruding and who are kept in this barbarous cradle for two or three years. When the jar is at last broken, the child is equipped for his trade with a set of distorted limbs and a wizened body surmounted by a head of normal size. Children are starved, maimed, and bruised in order to excite the pity of the unwary one who knows no better than to encourage the industry.

These children, however, are the only mendicants who really deserve compassion. "Be a beggar for three years and you wouldn't trade places with a Mandarin," says a Chinese proverb. On the whole, the guild members seem to find it a care-free life with lots of opportunity to take part in festivals, engage in blackmail, and walk away with as many chattels as they can without intruding on the industrial domain of the Thieves' Guild.

## V. THE WILES OF THE CHINESE CHAUFFEUR

THOUGH it may be true that the Chinese chauffeur does not know a spark plug from a differential, there are other branches of learning in which he deserves a degree, preferably the third. He knows more about grafting than Luther Burbank and more concerning quick methods of doubling his income than the writers of success articles in American magazines.

The car owner's troubles in China begin when the lady of the house announces that, rather than live longer without a machine, she will return home. Her husband knows that she won't, as she never was fond of doing her own work, but then he is not at his best in scenes and shows visible signs of weakening by the very emphasis of his refusal.

Ah Lee, deftly passing the potatoes and bamboo sprouts with a face as devoid of expression as a Japanese cat is of a tail, knows by experience in other family bouts that a treaty of peace will

## THE WILES OF THE CHINESE CHAUFFEUR

be signed shortly with the husband playing the part of the German delegates. By a remarkable coincidence a circular arrives next day from a local automobile agency, describing a car just the right size for the family. Friend Husband finally drops in and looks at it, not because he has any intention of buying it, of course, but because he likes to keep up with the new models and anyway, he had other business in the neighborhood.

The last act of this oft-repeated drama usually culminates in the exchange of an appropriate number of taels and the proud driving of the car home, where the lady of the house complains that it shouldn't have been painted gray, because gray doesn't go well with her type of complexion. The owner never sees the epilogue, however, which occurs when the houseboy presents himself to the garage with a smile as oily as a French salad dressing and demands an appropriate cum-sha.

But the man who thinks that his troubles are ended when he satisfies the voting majority of the household by the purchase of a car is as misled as the dramatist who believes that he has solved the troubles of his characters by lowering the curtain to the music of the wedding march. There

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

are many rocks on the road, both figuratively and literally speaking, and the chauffeur will make it his business to see that none of them are overlooked.

One of the first characteristics that the new owner is likely to note about his purchase is its inordinate appetite for gasoline. With a thumb firmly planted on the line in the circular which describes the car's ability to do fifteen or sixteen miles on a gallon, the owner calls at the garage and demands to know whether he has bought an automobile or an inebriate. The agent invites him to send in the machine for a general setting and overhauling, later proving its ability to live up to its reputation for sobriety. As soon as it returns home, however, the car falls from grace and continues its old demands for another gallon drink every six or seven miles.

If the owner could see his chauffeur stepping warily from a Chinese dyeing and cleaning establishment with a suspicious sag in his upper right hand pocket, a great light would probably dawn on his hitherto scrambled intelligence. There is a case on record of a lady who owned a small car which she used not more than an hour and a half a day, but which within twenty-five days had

## THE WILES OF THE CHINESE CHAUFFEUR

indulged itself to the extent of one hundred and three gallons. Incidentally, two new front tires strangely changed during that time into a pair as patched as a beggar's business suit and promptly blew up next time the car was used.

The fact that the press of competition forces local garages to pay commissions to chauffeurs who bring work to them is accountable for a vast number of stripped gears, missing spark plugs, and severed fenders. Long experimentation in the ways of damaging cars has taught the chauffeur that half-pumped tires have an extremely short lease on life. Therefore he usually sets forth gayly on the highway with tires sagging like the knees of a three-year-old suit, the pressure registering about forty-eight pounds when it should be in the neighborhood of eighty. The death-bang of a departing tire is music to the ears of a Chinese chauffeur, for it means that master will probably allow him to purchase another with the usual cumsha accompaniment.

The only free service which a car owner receives is that of young boys whom the chauffeurs permit to wash the machines. They receive no money for this service, feeling amply compensated by the privilege of running the machine in and

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

out of the garage. Thus they get a free course on handling an automobile, which will prepare them to become full-fledged car damagers later on. This chauffeur primary school is responsible for many a bent fender and dented radiator which the owner, after fruitless investigation, decides to accept as a visitation of Providence.

Though forced to follow the obnoxious cumsha system by the car owners' habit of trusting the purchasing to their employees, many garages in China are making a sincere effort to improve automobile conditions. They do their best to decrease speeding, one garage maintaining an informal court which fastens ten-dollar fines on any of its chauffeurs guilty of "furious driving." In such cases it also charges the defendant the urgent cable rate of two dollars a word for any comments passed on the sentence.

Shanghai has the car habit to a far greater extent than western cities. At home it is quite proper for a man in middle class circumstances to pilot a young lady to the theater in a street-car. The gentleman who made a *faux pas* of this sort in Shanghai, however, would on next application find the young lady's date book occupied for a year to come. The financial burden entailed



## THE WILES OF THE CHINESE CHAUFFEUR

by the custom is less than almost anywhere else in the world, especially considering the fact that the price of gasoline averages a dollar a gallon.

It occasionally happens that a chauffeur has a real grievance, such as occurs when the occupants of a hired car, being somewhat stimulated, refuse to sign the chit and beat the driver when he protests. But, on the whole, the followers of this particular profession sit high on the top of the world, receiving mishaps to their crafts with remarkable cheerfulness, and often turning the left fender after having been struck on the right.

## VI. PROPER CHINESE CUSTOM

I REMEMBER once reading in an etiquette book of 1832 that ladies should curtsy on entering a drawing-room and that they should always handle bread daintily when dipping it in soup. It also remarked, if I recall it correctly, that ladies should confine their conversation to the fine arts and not display an unseemly knowledge of political affairs. "If a lady mentions the latter subjects at all, it should be to ask a gentleman for instruction," the social Baedeker explained. The cover of the book was moss-grown and moldy, but not half as much so as the contents. Whoever tried to follow it to-day would be swept from the lifeline by the first curtsy, tossed ruthlessly in the conversational breakers by her references to the fine arts, and eventually dragged down beyond hope of rescue by the undertow of the soup.

Considering how the standard of "female behavior," as the etiquette book called it, checks up with the present, the changes going on in present-day China seem less startling. These changes, incidentally, are not as widespread as residents of

## PROPER CHINESE CUSTOM

---

the treaty ports are likely to believe, for the old etiquette is paramount throughout the interior and is still observed very largely, even in the centers of Western influence.

Chinese visiting cards in Shanghai are usually conventional squares of white pasteboard, but conservative families in other cities still use the old type of circus poster, brilliantly red in hue and eight by four inches in dimension. If such cards were used among foreigners, the proper card tray for a tea party would be a laundry basket, and a lawyer's brief case would be a necessary accompaniment of a call.

Many of the Chinese social customs, however, have a few millimeters of gray matter behind them. Take, for instance, the matter of sending gifts. Instead of presenting some one with several handkerchiefs bearing the wrong initial or an embroidered burlap complication made by a little girl in technical high school and stowed away since Christmas because nobody could figure out what it was for, the Chinese send an assortment of gifts and let the recipient take his choice. If this custom were followed at home, the day of dispatching an ash tray to Aunt Josephine who loathes smoke or a book on automobiles to a

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

family whose fastest vehicle is a go-cart would pass into happy oblivion. Foreigners given presents after this fashion, however, usually make the error of keeping the whole assortment, to the great disgust of a family with several more people to remember.

Another custom with real wisdom behind it is the cups of tea which make their appearance on the arrival of a guest about to pay a formal call. Any one who has tried to break away from a call, foreign-fashion, knows the long ritual of, "Oh, must you really go?" "Oh, surely you can stay a little longer," and "Wait just a minute. I've got the cutest Mandarin coat upstairs that I bought in the Native City. I'm sure it's genuine, because the man I bought it from spoke Mandarin fluently."

In China, the guest merely raises his teacup and the call is at an end. Sometimes when a person with more time than discretion overstays the limit for a one-round call, the host significantly handles a teacup himself. He who is obtuse enough to ignore this signal deserves to have his hat presented to him with an admonition not to rub too much fresh paint from the banisters on the way out. A foreigner not knowing this gentle signal

## PROPER CHINESE CUSTOM

---

of guest subtraction sometimes gulps down his tea during the first five minutes of the interview and is then startled to hear the servants calling his chair coolies to the courtyard gate.

Another custom which would be a life-saver to guests trying to divide an evening between a dinner party and a later engagement is the Chinese privilege of leaving the table before the host and the rest of company. The visitor with a date for later in the evening need only lay his chopsticks across an empty bowl, whereupon the host, observing the signal, remarks, "I hope you'll have a safe walk," and the guest departs without that dismal, cold jellyfish sensation of having made a social *faux pas*, which a person at a foreign dinner would experience under similar circumstances.

A boon to helpless children, too young to enter their own vote in the matter, is the custom which stigmatizes as improper the naming of an infant after its father, grandfather, or even more remote ancestors. If such a custom could only be insinuated into the social code of the West, a mighty army of Ichabods, Hepzibahs, Ebenezers, and Jeremiahs would arise to call it blessed. There are few spectacles more touching than a helpless infant swathed in a christening robe and being

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

labeled for life with some denominator which will make his school life miserable, cause him to writhe every time his wife summons him in public, and eventually lead him to part his name in the middle by reducing the offending tag to a mere initial. In China a child can choose a new name for himself when he starts school, another when he begins business, and a third to fit the slab on a grave-mound.

Men who, in writing to their wives on a vacation, can't think of anything to say that doesn't sound suspicious, would feel a lifelong indebtedness to any one introducing the Chinese idea that it isn't proper to correspond with your wife. A conservative Chinese, writing home, addresses the letter to his mother, if she is living, or else to one of his children. The wife, replying, always answers in the name of her child, even if he is too young to have anything but a daubing acquaintance with the ink slab and brush.

There is another bit of etiquette which demands that a person remove his spectacles in addressing a person older than himself, a guest, or a public official, the idea being that glasses denote age and therefore indicate a bit of dignified swank.

Some of the customs have a backing, not only

## PROPER CHINESE CUSTOM

---

of reason, but of benevolence. In some parts of the country, for instance, a burden bearer always has the right of way on a highroad, regardless of his social status. There is an early record of six foreigners slaughtered by enraged country people because they beat an old man carrying a bundle of wood who insisted on his right to the path.

There is one piece of Chinese etiquette that would make a distinct sensation in foreign circles. We refer to the custom which demands that a husband describe his wife, if he mentions her to a guest, as "the foolish one of the family," or "the mean one of the inner apartments." We predict that this innovation would be followed by a hasty mobilization of the hardware and several informal exits by way of upper story windows.

## VII. THE CITY OF TWINKLING TOES

JUDGING from the amount of attention given to rhythm in the feet, Shanghai ought to be the most poetic city in the world. The only trouble is that the feet are not the kind you scan but the kind you step on, and the rhythm is concerned, not with the flow of words, but with the staccato beat of heels on a hardwood floor. If there were only as many trained minds in the city as there are educated toes, Shanghai would make ancient Athens look like a North Dakota village listening to the trombone soloist on the Chatauqua circuit.

It would take a combination of philosophers, anthropologists and psycho-analysts to discover just why Shanghai is never happy unless its feet are in motion. The fact remains, however, that staid married men who at home would spend their evenings pottering around the back yard until after dark and then devote themselves to reading automobile catalogues or playing a game of casino with the wife are as badly affected by the craze as



## THE CITY OF TWINKLING TOES

---

youngsters whose dancing pumps always were the most important part of their wardrobe.

Consider, too, the married woman whose best evening gown at home suggested the dress worn by the Greek professor's wife at a faculty reception. A few months in Shanghai, and she is stepping around the Carlton in a georgette crepe gown with the hem cut in points somewhere near the high altitude record and complaining when weary musicians begin to put overcoats on their implements.

At home in an average household a quiet evening is the normal course of events and a party, a cataclysm which involves trying on evening gowns which no longer fit, a frantic rush for appropriate slippers, and the application of dabs of gasoline to a spot on the dress suit where the ice cream was spilled at the Elks' banquet.

In Shanghai, however, the conditions are exactly reversed. Here the party is the normal course of events and a quiet evening at home the jog out of the orbit.

Every night scores of people firmly resolve to stay in and get some rest. But when the lights begin to twinkle on the high towers and the nightly automobile procession of evening dress bowls its

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

way along Nanking Road, the stay-at-home suddenly lowers his book and takes a furtive glance at the clock.

Then Mary Smith or Susie Jones, who had felt absolutely too tired to drag herself home from the office, confides to the mouth-piece of the telephone that she'd be simply delighted and will be ready in three quarters of an hour.

A husband who at home always attended social functions with his ears lying back wonders casually what the people next door are doing that evening. Then also the wife who used to list dancing with cigarette smoking on her personal index, shakes out her tulle evening dress to see if that tear could be darned in case she wanted to wear it in a hurry.

At one o'clock in the morning, Mary Smith, her escort, the husband, the wife, the family next door and several hundred duplicates of them are busily engaged trying to catapult their way through a human wall of dancers without fracturing any more ribs than seem strictly necessary.

In the pink shaded interiors of Shanghai's popular dancing resorts, tired lines about the eyes are mellowed by the soft glow and the all-night face becomes the complexion of the girl just out

## THE CITY OF TWINKLING TOES

---

of school. Here the grapejuice parties of impeccable youth take place within elbow reach of ladies whose reputations are as light as their gowns, and that part of the world upon which the rest does not call occupies floor space with the city's elect. Around each table, however, is an invisible line as impassable socially as a cement wall, which means that mere physical proximity offers small opportunity for better acquaintance.

Though the crowd ebbs and flows through the passing nights, there are certain specimens who are always on the floor. For instance, one never fails to see the married couple verging on middle age, who are having their first taste of the Shanghai atmosphere. They generally wear the evening clothes of several years ago and they jog through the dance in a way which proves that their last appearance in a ballroom was contemporary with the schottische. On their faces, however, is the fixed, fatuous smile of the small boy with jam on his chin—a smile which tells the onlooker that the Shanghai dance trap has caught two more unwary nibblers.

Then there is always the young lady who is smoking a cigarette for the first time, and who takes her initial puff with a squeal and a giggle.

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

Later in the evening, however, she holds the weed with the professional grace of an Italian countess and flicks off the ashes expertly with her little finger. In some cases this first lesson occurs as frequently as most young ladies' twentieth birthday. There is one bright flapper who learned five times to our knowledge in one month, tutored by five different instructors.

Neither is any evening complete without the young man just out from home who is apparently wearing a dinner jacket for the first time and who spends most of his energy fingering collar and studs and trying to catch a glimpse of himself in the mirror. Speaking of mirrors likewise calls to mind the girl in a new dress who insists on whirling her partner round and round the pillars set with mirrors, without regard to the fox trot traffic regulations or other people's physical geography.

On the floor, also, is usually the youth who hangs far over his partner's shoulder, and keeps an eye on her heels, apparently to make sure that they stay off his pumps. Occasionally one sees the couple trying to shimmy, with the man lifting his shoulders like a French waiter unable to account for an overcharge on the bill.

## THE CITY OF TWINKLING TOES

---

The gowns range from simple white affairs that suggest graduation frocks to shimmery, snaky draperies such as might have been worn by an Elinor Glyn heroine when the misled young man decided to commit suicide at her feet. The really startling dresses are usually kept in reserve for Saturday night, which is also the evening when the largest number of bachelor tables are observable around the side-lines.

Tea dances at the Astor House formerly took place only once a week. Later the demand caused them to be introduced twice a week and soon they were taking place every day except Saturday and Sunday, with a dinner dance in the ballroom practically every night.

Revolutions may rise and break, exchange may go up or down, and the Far East may tie itself into a dozen diplomatic knots, but throughout it all, Shanghai continues to whirl like a dancing dervish under the pink-shaded lights of its crowded cafés.

## VIII. SUICIDE AS A POPULAR PASTIME

SHUFFLING off the mortal coil is one of China's principal indoor sports. Considering the fact that it is difficult to stage a dress rehearsal and that no single individual can hope for very much practice in the art, the Chinese are a race of expert suiciders. Statistics, it is true, are as strange to China as a haircut to a Rocky Mountain goat; yet, even the most casual investigators are convinced that suicides each year number hundreds of thousands and that at least one person in every four hundred makes his own time schedule for a journey to the hereafter.

The great trouble is that in the Far East suicide is not regarded as socially gauche. On the contrary, it is considered an eminently satisfactory way of getting the last word in an argument and a doubly effective method of telling one's mother-in-law where to head in or of expressing displeasure with one's employer.

To be sure, the victorious one has no chance to leer triumphantly at his opponent and remark,

## SUICIDE AS A POPULAR PASTIME

---

"Curses on you at last! For twenty years I have waited for this moment!" But then he feels somewhat compensated in the thought that his spirit will have full haunting privileges on a long-term lease, to say nothing of the right to plow and harrow his enemy's epidermis with a view to raising a crop of goose-flesh.

The Chinese, however, do not give unlimited encouragement to suicide. In Foochow, for instance, there is a society which stations two boats above the Bridge of a Thousand Ages and two below it to rescue those who try to dash themselves into the rapids. In the Temple of the Eighteen Hells at Peking, where highly specialized sins meet with equally specialized punishments, there is a little cozy corner set apart exclusively for ladies who throw themselves down well shafts.

Judging from numerous reports of suicide, however, such object lessons in Peking and elsewhere have little deterrent effect. The man who commits suicide on the doorstep of another achieves the acme of revenge. Beside the prospect of receiving unwelcome attentions from the shadow world, the recipient of the surprise package is made the subject of yamen inquiry so searching that an investigating coroner at home would re-

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

semble little Effie coming over to play with her dolls.

In case the person bent on revenge has no desire to return to dust ahead of schedule, he sometimes arranges to have a beggar's body deposited on his enemy's threshold. Though the beggar obviously will be less painstaking and assiduous in his haunting than the injured party, the difficulty with the yamen and the necessity for squeeze will be quite as great.

It so happens in China that a beggar neglected in life to the point of starvation on the highroad becomes after death a person of such distinction that a dozen yamen officials must investigate his demise—provided, of course, his body is found on the premises of some one able to pay a gentlemanly squeeze.

The only difficulty about dying on a hostile doorstep occurs when a man has two enemies and is confronted by the obvious impossibility of killing himself in two places at once.

Another urge toward suicide is the desire of one disputant to reach the next world and present his case to the judges of Hades before the arrival of the other party. Under such circumstances, the other person usually has a suiciding



## SUICIDE AS A POPULAR PASTIME

party of his own as quickly as possible, so as to reach the scene before his rival has had a chance to put over too much doubtful testimony. One can imagine the chagrin of the first ghost when the second bursts into the court room just as he is painting the latter's character in the lurid tints of post-impressionist art.

Failure in public office and defeat in battle were long regarded as compelling reasons for suicide. There was a time when disgruntled houseboys hanged themselves in the house of their foreign employer, but having learned that foreigners are practically immune from ghostly annoyance, dissatisfied servants nowadays merely kidnap the household's supply of tobacco and go to work for the family across the street.

Suicides among women are far more numerous than among men, the most popular causes being an exacting mother-in-law or an unwelcome betrothal. The widow who took her life after the death of her husband was honored with memorial arches in Fukien and Kwantung, though pressure was not generally exerted in a suicidal direction by relatives or friends. When a young wife is driven to death by a relentless mother-in-law, her

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

family visit the death-chamber, support the corpse in their arms, place a broom in its hands, and thus sweep wealth, longevity, and happiness away from the house forever.

In Japan, fashions in suicide are observed as scrupulously as fashions in kimonos. During one year Chuzenji Falls was the popular suicide resort and several hundred people accordingly dashed themselves to death over the edge of the declivity. Later a small bathing place near Kobe became the mode and accordingly the stream of death-bent traffic turned in a new direction.

Trains run all over Japan, but, for some obscure reason, people traveled from every part of the island empire to throw themselves under the trains at Suma. Deaths became so numerous that a Christian Japanese woman of Kobe had a large signboard erected near the crossing which bore the words, "Would-be suicides, wait a minute! If you feel that you must take your life, please call on me first and talk it over." Below it was the lady's name and address. In less than two months, 160 women came to her as a result of having read the signboards.

With the spread of education and the influence

## SUICIDE AS A POPULAR PASTIME

---

of Western opinion on the subject, the number of suicides in the Far East is gradually diminishing. But the fact remains that the average Chinese or Japanese still attaches less importance to taking his life than a Westerner does to having his tonsils out.

## IX. WHY IS A RICKSHA?

PERHAPS after our return to the country where tramcars are trolleys and lifts are elevators, we shall step out of the door some evening and shout "Hwang Pao Tso" down the dusky street. Then, after waiting in vain for the answering call of "Misee," we shall come to in a sudden start of remembrance, turn sadly in the direction of the subway entrance and trust that the guard won't slam the door until at least two thirds of us is inside.

All those remarks about absence making the heart grow fonder can be applied to the ricksha man like a mustard poultice. While he is with us, we think only of his abnormal appetite for coppers, his fondness for dragging us over choice bits of street repairing, and his habit of disappearing for chow just as we are all set to depart. But when we return home and begin to consult the taxicab schedules, we think with deep appreciation of the straw-hatted, brown-legged gentry of the highway who played horse for us as enthusiastically as a bachelor uncle does for his first nephew.

## WHY IS A RICKSHA?

---

Most foreigners can recall their first ricksha ride with a peculiar vividness. Ours took place in Japan. When we crawled into the one-seated vehicle and let the kuruma man close us in with a black curtain, we had all the sensations of a corpse starting out at the head of a funeral procession. All we needed was a wreath.

On that premier excursion, we also had a glimpse of the social complications into which the gleeful ricksha man occasionally runs his patrons. Traveling with us were two very, very dignified ladies who are pillars in the American educational system. After trailing for many blocks what they thought were the rickshas of the party, the vehicles ahead stopped and the horrified ladies discovered that they had been following two perfectly strange men. On the sensations of the educators and the resulting tableau we drop a hasty curtain.

Some day a person with the social reputation of the Far East at heart is going to write a book on ricksha etiquette. Over in America there used to be a finishing school where the young lady pupils spent patient hours learning to get in and out of a carriage gracefully. We are deficient in that branch of knowledge, as our chief need was learning how to get in and out of a pay-as-

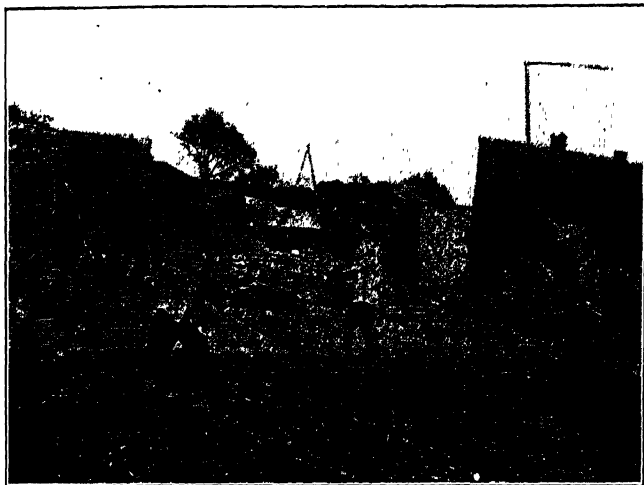
## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

you-enter car gracefully and there isn't that kind of a school.

Anyway, we never have learned the proper way of wrapping a ricksha around us. Every time we get in, we catch ourselves on something, and when the top is down we have more trouble turning around than an athletic sardine at the bottom of the can. We have never got out of a covered one yet without causing our hat to eclipse at least one eye, and if we have an umbrella along, we always trip ourselves up. But then we are not entirely discouraged. It would be considerably worse if we lived in Soochow and had to ride on the donkeys.

We don't know just how he acquires it, but it is indisputably true that the ricksha man of China has an uncanny sixth sense which would be a great asset to a trance medium or a milliner trying to guess the extent of a lady's bankroll before setting a price on a hat. The ricksha man can scent the tang of salt water about a new arrival at a range of a hundred feet and revise his tariff upward according to the shortness of time that his victim has been on shore. He knows when pay day falls due in every navy that parks its warships off the Public Gardens and can detect



China's threshing machines.



Coolies are cheaper than horses and almost as strong.





## WHY IS A RICKSHA?

---

the various nuances of inebriation with the skill of a prohibition agent.

No mere newspaper in town can compete with him in his knowledge of church services, club meetings, missionary gatherings, or convivial parties. Every assemblage involving a score or more people finds that the ricksha coolie has somehow got wind of it and is ready to offer his services in appropriate numbers at the sound of the Amen or the playing of "Home, Sweet Home."

The first lesson that a newcomer learns about the chauffeur of a ricksha is that to pay him too much will bring forth a storm of imprecation louder than that which occurs at home when an East Side housewife tells the groceryman what she thought of his last basket of eggs. The second lesson is to beware of the coolie who airs a knowledge of English. He always expects an honorarium for the accomplishment and is capable of saying various unlovely things if the sum is denied. The third is that to name a hotel as one's destination labels a person as a newcomer and means an increase in the rate.

The ricksha, which was introduced from Japan, made its début in China more than a generation ago. The original specimens, which were cozily

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

tired in iron rims, promptly won the name of bone-shakers. A few of the early rattlers are still on duty in the Chinese city, giving free osteopathic treatment to anybody brave enough to patronize them.

The number of ricksha licenses in the International Settlement is never in excess of 8,000, but in the French Concession, where there is no limit, there are 9,000 at least. Most of the rickshas are owned by large companies which farm them out to contractors, who farm them out to sub-contractors, who rent them to coolies. The coolie usually becomes a contractor himself, letting out his vehicle at night to another coolie who often hires a subordinate to haul the chariot during the least profitable hours.

The ricksha man of Japan is an aristocrat compared to his brother in China. We have been hauled about in Tokio by a gentleman wearing spectacles and a black silk suit, with a white handkerchief peeking daintily from an upstairs pocket. During the period of bloated finance immediately following the war, it was by no means unusual to see a Japanese ricksha coolie sprinting down the street with a fox fur slung artlessly around his neck. If a Chinese coolie were observed with

## WHY IS A RICKSHA?

---

that species of decoration, it would involve a free trip to the Mixed Court and a story on his part about the fur having dropped on him from an upstairs window.

In Canton, the city government has passed an ordinance gradually reducing the number of ricksha licenses until they are entirely eliminated. Their contention is that the ricksha lowers man to the status of a draft animal and has the effect of lessening the dignity of human life for both the puller and his patron. Undoubtedly their stand is the right one, but somehow the ricksha coolie, with his ready gift of repartee, the cigarette he has plucked from under somebody's heel, and the jaunty angle of his unblocked straw hat does not seem to be suffering from any sense of self-depreciation. If you think he is a down-trodden worm, just pay him three cents too little or twenty cents too much.

## X. SCRAMBLED MILLINERY

IT may be true that Chinese women sing only a feeble treble in the matrimonial duet. It may be true that Friend Husband never takes them out to dinner parties and that they don't know what it is to put on a décolleté gown. But at least they have one tremendous advantage over the pale missees. They don't have to wear hats.

Something always happens to hats after they arrive in China. We don't know just what it is, but it does. It's psychological. There is a prevalent impression that there aren't any attractive hats in China and every new chapeau does its best to justify the view. No matter if it does appear perky when worn off the boat or extracted from its tissue paper wrappings at the Customs Office. In just a little while it will list heavily to port or begin to settle at the stern, and then the wearer will no longer be mistaken for a recent arrival. If you look at the hats in some of the shop windows and compare them with the majority which you see on the streets, you will conclude that American women in China reserve one

## SCRAMBLED MILLINERY

---

set of headgear to display and another to wear.

We are peculiarly bitter on the subject of hats. Fresh with innocent optimism, we embarked from Vancouver with our crowning glories packed in a milliner's cardboard box. When we reassembled our baggage at Yokohama we concluded that a heavy trick elephant which rumor said was aboard must have practiced all his tricks with one foot on our hatbox. Or else one of the cook's assistants used it to sit on when he peeled potatoes in the galley. Anyway, in salvaging the wreckage we extracted one collapsible hat that had proved itself by collapsing into a cross between a dust cloth and an inverted pocket; something that had once been a feathered turban but which now resembled a chicken after a collision with a Ford; and a summer hat that would have served excellently as an exhibit in a murder trial to show where the blow fell which killed the victim.

All we had left was our newest and best hat from New York which was hanging in the stateroom and a three-cornered velvet affair which looked possible but not probable when extracted from the fatal box. That hat finally came to be a nightmare to us. We put it on hopefully many

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

times, only to be disillusioned by a corner that stood up above the others like the prow of an old Greek galley, or a brim that resembled in contour the Great Wall of China as it meanders over the hills of Chihli. Many a friend has pounced on it with gleaming eyes and a remark to the effect that it only needed a little straightening up. Many a friend has pinched the corners, preened the wispy feathers, smoothed the brim, and returned it to us with a cheerful, "Now try it on!" Many a time we have tried it on in a hopeful spirit that crashed to earth as soon as we interviewed a mirror, leading us to remark unconvincingly, "It does look better, doesn't it?" hoping meanwhile that said friend would depart so as not to learn that we didn't intend to wear her handiwork outdoors.

After trying in vain to lose it, we left it behind us at a hotel in Peking, only to be chased to the station by a room boy who returned the wreck to us through the car window and who had to be cumshawed for his highly unnecessary service. We finally threw the hat out the window into a Chihli field, where it perched on the top of a grave mound and formed a unique offering to the ancestor. We trust that he got more enjoyment out of it than we did.

## SCRAMBLED MILLINERY

---

Our best New York hat we lost in the Ningpo River, while standing pensively on the deck of the Hsin Pekin. Just before it went down for the third time, it was rescued by a coolie in a sampan who is probably wearing it to the glory of his native village and the pride of his untutored heart. Since then we acquired a lacquered hatbox which filled up so promptly with other things that there is no room for hats. But as we have no hats left anyway it doesn't make much difference.

One of the favorite China models seen on the street but not in shop windows is the pancake mode, the brim of which droops all around like a griddlecake with no visible means of support. Then there is the small, tight-fitting turban that doubtless began life as a larger hat and from which all deck space has since been removed. Also one frequently sees various editions of the hat which somebody with a smaller head size sent out from home, and which fits like a basket of wash carried on the head of an Italian peasant woman.

Not all Shanghai hats were improperly reared, however. Go to a tea dance and you will see airy little things of tulle and gold lace which the tailor kidnaped from somebody's evening dress

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

and which can be looked at without wincing. Unfortunately, however, a great many hats in the city look as if they were suffering from curvature of the brim and acute psychosis of the trimming. As for us, we wish those peach-basket hats that were in style a few years ago would come back again. We can get a lot of peach baskets down at Hongkew Market.



## XI. BOATS IN FIFTY-SEVEN VARIETIES

FAR back in the days when I studied geography, I remember hearing that millions of people lived on boats in China because there wasn't room enough for them on dry land. Sometimes when I had nothing else to do, I used to look out the classroom window and think of those millions gazing enviously at the land they had never stepped on in their lives, on account of the country being crammed to the very edge with people fighting for standing room

Though I was inclined later to put the story in the same pigeonhole with George Washington's cherry tree, I remember the shock of surprise I felt on seeing great stretches of open country in Shantung and Chihli. The only crowding and elbowing I noticed was on the part of the grave-mounds.

No, people don't live on boats in China because they happened to be born after Mr. Malthus hung out the S.R.O. sign. The sampan population is all in the business of bringing onions to where they weren't before, or parking cargoes

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

with misanthropic fragrances alongside of houseboats, or giving voice to a few bits of higher criticism when steam launches put an impermanent wave into the surrounding dampness.

When it comes to developing varieties of boats, China wins the sack of asbestos-coated kindling wood. Strange to relate, considering that China is an unfeminine land and navigation not usually looked upon as a ladylike occupation, it was one Ho Sinkwi, a pious Taoist lady, who invented the first boat. While engaged in celebrating Clean-Up Week by rubbing a few layers from the family wardrobe, Mme. Ho noted leaves floating on water. Being an experimental sort of lady, she promptly constructed herself a raft built on the architecture of the leaves. A ride or two, however, convinced her that there isn't any use in dressing up if you can't make your boat go anywhere, so she went back to doing amah pidgin at the side of the babbling brook.

Here her observation abilities again came to the fore and the steering gear of a fish gave her the idea for oars and rudder, after which she spent all her time running up and down the stream to mah-jong parties. The legend doesn't state whether or not she finished the wash. Probably,

## BOATS IN FIFTY-SEVEN VARIETIES

however, she established a laundry tradition which accounts for the present-day arrival of the only large tablecloth in the house five days after the dinner party.

Somebody stated once that wherever there is a camel, there is a picture. The same remark can be applied to junks. A webbed sail seen against a rising moon or drifting down a canal like a lazy autumn insect, or huddled with others before the sun at dawn is enough to waken sleeping sonnets even in the soul of a sausage dealer.

Junks, however, were not designed merely for water colorists or as subject matter for letters home. They are eminently practical. People who cancel passage on discovering that the steamer is only a paltry 10,000 tons are referred to a consideration of the plucky little junks that formerly kept up a regular traffic with India and Persia. Marco Polo even remarks about the departure of one of the Khan's ships for South Africa. With carrier pigeons serving as wireless, a bit of iron for a compass, and stars as a chart of the course, the junks dipped out into the seven seas and fluttered their brown-ribbed sails in the harbors of half the world.

A glimpse of the Whangpoo from Shanghai's

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

Bund furnishes a complete history of Chinese navigation. Unfortunately the sampans in this region lack the highly polished ornateness of those farther south. In Canton and Foochow, the boats are gold-leafed without and incensed within. The little grilled doors of the family altar reveal a glimpse of tablets, red candles, and curling smoke, just below a corset advertisement cut from *Vogue*. Each of them carry the usual eye on either side of the bow, so the boat can see where it is going.

In Canton one goes to dinner parties in sampans and then crawls up the sides and over the decks of half a dozen junks before reaching the jetty. Torn lace and smudgy satin are the order of the evening at most Canton parties, unless the guests had sufficient forethought to bring their gowns in a suitcase.

Off the Cantonese Bund one sees river junks bristling with stove-pipe cannon to intimidate pirates; flower boats, rented out for feasts and lavishly decorated in red, with festoons of hanging kerosene lamps; stern-wheel boats, operated by rice-power, with twenty-four coolies on a treadmill; and foot-boats, rowed by mariners who would make excellent ballet dancers if they only

## BOATS IN FIFTY-SEVEN VARIETIES

had a floor under their feet instead of oars. Most important of all there are the cruisers of the Chinese navy, dazzling in white paint and fetchingly decorated with wash hanging over the funnels.

During the recent disturbances in Canton, the sampans hit on a style of decoration not dreamed of by Ho Sinkwi when she surrounded herself by her boat and started to pay off her social obligations. In their anxiety to be neutrals during the struggle between Kwangtung and Kwangsi, the sampans broke out in a rash of American flags.

Some of the Chinese Betsy Rosses outdid the original by providing the emblems with more stripes than a tiger and enough stars for a Milky Way. Though the State Department would probably be startled by this short cut to naturalization, it could readily enough frighten away the prospective citizens by chartering a launch and trying to collect an income tax.

Much of China in the interior does its navigating in sooty passenger launches, but despite this touch of modernism, one doesn't have to travel very far from Shanghai to see hardy mariners sailing between the edges of the mulberry groves in tubs as innocent of a rudder as Chinese babies are of pasteurized milk.

## XII. UNMIXING THE MIXED COURT

THOUGH there is no royalty in Shanghai except on the playing cards, an astonishingly large number of its native citizens have been presented at court. The formalities, it is true, differ from other courts in that those presented are prodded with a club in the back instead of being stroked on the shoulder with a sword. Likewise nobody makes them a knight, but frequently they are given several days. There is no court uniform except bracelets, and these are not especially decorative. Nor do those concerned do any bragging after the presentation ceremonies are over.

The institution in question is very appropriately known as the Mixed Court. After visiting it and trying to get a little information on some of its customs, I doubt if anything ever could be more mixed, not even excluding the results of an infernal machine in a grocery delivery wagon. The Mixed Court is a legal general merchandise store, carrying everything in stock from one-way tickets to the Arsenal to fines totaling one piece of Mexican currency. It tries murder cases, settles

## UNMIXING THE MIXED COURT

---

land suits, grants divorces, breaks wills of both the legal and stubborn variety, hears ricksha pullers tell how perfectly good lap robes climbed out of adjacent machines and snuggled right up around them without any assistance on their part, and fines coolies for carrying a dozen chickens in sleeping-car space appropriate to only six.

Incidentally, the Mixed Court is perhaps the only trial court in the world from which there is no appeal. When the foreign assessor and the Chinese magistrate intone a duet totaling twenty years, there is no possibility of a rescript from a higher court a few months later finding the prisoner "Not guilty" and voting him a bunch of daffodils.

In the case of a death sentence, however, there is a certain amount of circumlocution. Refraining from any crude remarks about suspension by the cervical vertebrae, the court merely orders the prisoner to the Arsenal. Of course, the associations circling around an arsenal might seem to the prisoner a rather strong hint, but his fate is not officially settled until after a perfunctory trial before a Chinese magistrate, which usually goes on while the soldiers outside are loading their rifles.

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

One reason why I was so mixed at Mixed Court was because practically all the proceedings take place in some version of the Chinese language. The foreign assessors speak at least one dialect, and the Chinese magistrates know several. Mandarin is the official tongue of the court, and though foreign police officials testify in English, the other proceedings are not translated. Seated below the assessor and magistrate, a Chinese court reporter busily daubs down the testimony with a brush and red ink, while a foreign stenographer across the table embalms the remarks of English-speaking witnesses after methods of his own.

Anybody who believes that the pace of the East is that of a club-footed snail should study the acceleration of justice as demonstrated by the Mixed Court. Cases are disposed of so rapidly that the prisoners' dock looks like a crowd running to a fire. The court handles an average of 50,000 criminal cases a year and about 7,000 civil suits besides. It is a strictly business institution, unhampered by any such formalities as administering the oath, picking a jury, and listening to long technical arguments about the omission of



## UNMIXING THE MIXED COURT

the defendant's middle initial from the indictment.

When the civil court was entirely under Chinese control, it simplified matters still further by prohibiting lawyers from entering a court room while a trial was going on. Probably the litigants were just as well satisfied, because they figured that if they won a case, they didn't need an attorney and if they lost it, they might have done likewise with a lawyer's assistance and had a large fee to pay besides.

The first faint hints of the birth of the Mixed Court appear in the records of 1856, when the British Consul announced that he had permission from Chih sien to sentence Chinese offenders to hard labor on the roads. When the first British police official was assigned to the Chinese Court of Shanghai, merely to keep an eye on the proceedings, he found that Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan were right when they declaimed that a policeman's lot is not a happy one. The Chinese magistrate hit upon the expedient of holding court at nine o'clock in the evening, and other untoward hours just to elude the spectator. When the British officer discovered this little eccentricity of justice and resolved to wait for the performance,

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

no matter at what hour the curtain went up, the lights in the room where he sat always mysteriously glimmered out, leaving him to grope in gloom for his pencil, records, and sardine sandwiches

But as the copybook used to say, "Persistence wins." By 1863, a rudimentary Mixed Court had been organized, where the British and American Consuls tried cases touching the interests of their nationals. It was not until the Revolution of 1911, when the Chinese magistrates took to the tall bamboo with the funds of the court adhering to their inside pockets, that the Mixed Court was organized as it exists to-day.

Before the era when a foreign assessor sat daily on the bench with a Chinese magistrate, the Mixed Court's motto was evidently "Treat 'em rough." It was a place where the thud of the bamboo beat rhythmically on the morning breezes and the epidermis of the prisoners—a place with various gentle persuaders at its disposal as a means of prodding on the lagging memories of witnesses.

At that period in its history, those under death sentence were not sent to the Arsenal for amateur sharpshooters to practice on. Instead, they dis-

## UNMIXING THE MIXED COURT

solved partnership with their heads on extremely short notice, and it is chronicled that many Shanghai ladies made an informal picnic out of the event and calmly took snapshots for their souvenir albums. Prisoners in the dock always knelt before the magistrate while in his presence, and occasionally a Chinese in the Mixed Court betrays his past record by kneeling as soon as he enters the prisoners' dock.

Back of the main building is a little annex that is not usually a part of courts at home. Thirty years ago, one Tsing Fooshing was known from the Willow Tea House to Chapei as a just magistrate. When he left the court for less known occupations, his subordinates built a joss house for him in the rear of the Mixed Court, imported a wax gentleman with fierce black mustachios and a bead headdress and proceeded to chin-chin the deceased judiciary.

The red candles still drip and gleam in the little joss house and worshipers kneel every day on the torn cushion before the departed's uncomplimentary likeness, his special petitioners being detectives unable to bag their quarry, litigants in civil cases, and released prisoners with a strong desire to keep out of trouble in the future.

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

Before the day ten years ago when crude foreigners introduced such barbarities as card index systems, a Chinese fairy lived in the Mixed Court file-room. Whenever an important document was missing, the clerks wasted no time pawing over the records. They merely lit a punk-stick before the fairy's tablet and next morning the misplaced paper was always on top of the files. The fairy with a file-room education proved such a labor-saver that it is a wonder efficiency experts have not imported a few for use at home. Foreign officers, however, ousted the invisible employee by introducing an up-to-date system for cataloguing documents and the fairy has probably been obliged to take up knitting in order to occupy the weary hours.

The influence of the spiritual, however, is by no means gone from the Police Department. Very recently, a Chinese policeman assigned to the pound wagon objected strenuously to serving on the ground that he might be born a canine in his next incarnation and then all the curs he had caught would combine to make him lead a dog's life.

Perhaps the most outstanding feature of the Mixed Court is the lily-white purity of everybody

## UNMIXING THE MIXED COURT

---

in the prisoners' dock. Nobody is ever guilty. It is a poor coolie who can't think up an alibi on a few seconds' notice, and he cheerfully proceeds to do it. If caught with a totally strange chicken under his arm, for instance, he merely tells the court that it flew there while he was walking down the street and that he never noticed it until the policeman pointed it out to him. I imagine that even the famous coolie who entered with a step-ladder and took the clock off the wall while court was in session would remark, in case he happened to be seen again, that he was merely making the time pass.

Many an inglorious though not mute Guy de Maupassant has stood in the Prisoners' Dock at the Mixed Court. The trouble is that the magistrates have such a keen appreciation of fiction that they simply won't let the story tellers go.

### XIII. TRAIN VAUDEVILLE

TRAVELING on a Chinese train has several advantages over walking. You get so much closer to the people, for instance. The desire to observe the customs of the Far East at close range is always the reason which we give for traveling second class. It gets by, too, at least with other people who are traveling second class. They usually hastily assure us that they are going that way for the same reason, after which we both proceed to fence ourselves in with luggage and get as far away from these customs as possible.

The chief thing that strikes the visitor is the thoroughness with which a dweller in the Far East makes himself at home in a train. Over in Japan, the first move of a citizen starting on a journey is to remove his shoes. The next is to invest in a clay teapot and the third is to blow up an air pillow. Then he or she draws feet off the floor, places the air pillow on a window sill, plants an elbow on it, and dreams peacefully until it is time to buy the usual two wooden boxes of

## TRAIN VAUDEVILLE

---

hot rice and spare culinary parts of dubious description. The scene is usually made less monotonous by the gentleman who vetoes his Western clothes in favor of a kimono during the course of the journey or the lady who gets out several combs and proceeds to make up her pompadour.

In China the air pillow enjoys but small vogue, its claim to popularity as a traveling companion being entirely overshadowed by the thermos bottle. Nor does any Chinese gentleman consider parting with his footgear an essential for a happy journey, though he might feel urged to remove his long outer garment if the weather is warm. He often breaks the tedium of travel by chanting strange ditties in a high falsetto, or by engaging in a game with his friends involving fingers and much noise. If the journey is a short one, he is almost certain to have a bird cage along.

There are some features in which the Chinese trains excel those across the Pacific. For instance, the little table between seats which serves equally well as a buffet for watermelon seeds, a support for bird cages, a foundation for solitaire, and a prop for weary heads, fulfills another useful purpose in eliminating the pilgrimage to the dining car. Travelers across the American continent

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

who hear George of brunette complexion announce that dinner is being served in the dining car just ahead, decide after tripping over the assortment of valises and infants in a dozen cars, that it is ahead somewhere on the train that left yesterday. When he at last reaches a point where the confined odors of cooking are trying heroically to make an impression on the unyielding Pullman car atmosphere, he merely has to wait at the end of the queue and balance himself while the train takes all the curves on high.

Such a train at home is usually described as a "limited," called thus because its service so nearly approaches the limit.

In China, on the other hand, a deft car boy brings the dinner to one's seat, not spilling more than half of it en route. The game of trying to guess what one is going to receive after reading the menu is a popular one with all foreign travelers. Personally we have enjoyed such rare epicurean dishes as "comble kitties" and "lettuce farce."

The average Chinese tourist is unacquainted with any artificial limits on the time for consuming food. He begins with tea as soon as he boards the train, follows it shortly with a meal, buys



## TRAIN VAUDEVILLE

---

varnished fruit on sticks along the way, and fills up all the chronological gaps with watermelon seeds.

Those who travel by night are offered many more features, including the blanket famine during the cold snaps, and the slippery leather or wicker berths which cause the harassed traveler to spend most of the night clinging to the bedclothes. There is a space between the upper berth and the wall especially arranged for the dropping of blankets, hot-water bottles, handkerchiefs and articles of clothing on the occupant of the berth below. This device produces an informal atmosphere and leads to many pleasant social relationships which are threshed out later in the consular courts.

Considering the matter from all angles, however, trains in China are far superior to the newcomer's expectations. What is more, they usually run on time even if the station master has to set back the clock to do it.

.

#### XIV. FACE CONSERVATION AS A NATIONAL INDUSTRY

IF all the face that is saved annually in China could only be put in storage, there would be enough on hand to supply features for several generations to come. Saving face ranks, next to saving cash, as the greatest national industry. Of course the ambition to save face is not entirely unknown in the Western world, being the inspiration for the nose guards worn by football heroes and the reason why most men shave themselves. It is in China, however, that it has been developed to the point of a technic with a ritual more elaborate than that of a negro lodge ceremony.

Saving face might also be described as the art of letting people down easy. It teaches how to call a man a thief in the course of three polite letters and five cups of tea, how to dismiss an employee by begging him to remain at his post, and how to put the skids under an unwelcome guest without glancing at the clock or handing him his hat.

## FACE CONSERVATION

---

The Chinese proclivity for ready-to-wear excuses and the general talent for light fiction of an extemporaneous character have undoubtedly been fostered by the face-saving habit.

The system probably grew out of a double desire to conserve personal dignity on all occasions and to follow the usual Chinese practice of handling social situations with velvet gloves instead of with padded ones. The average Chinese is about as fond of a fight as a watermelon thief is of a barbed wire fence. He therefore feels that the hour spent embroidering verbal Mandarin costumes to clothe naked truths are well worth the strain on his time and originality.

Take the matter of a dismissal, for instance. In the crude Western world, an unsatisfactory employee would be summoned to his chief's office and informed that the peg occupied by his hat and coat was to be undecorated by the end of the week. The very word "fired" suggests the usual speed of the process.

In China, however, a man is sacked so gently that he doesn't know whether somebody has separated him from his job or handed him a bouquet. As a rule, a third party approaches the superfluous clerk and remarks that he is really

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

wasting his unusual talents on his present position, that there isn't nearly enough future in it for him, and that, though the firm would be sadly crippled by his loss, they are willing, for his sake, to allow him to go as soon as he finds something commensurate with his very great ability. The clerk thereupon takes the hint, but continues the face-saving process by committing verbal murder and asking for a leave of absence to attend a funeral in a conveniently distant part of the province. His employer thanks him for his past work, praises his ability, and urges him to return as soon as the leave of absence is up. The sacked employee therefore departs in a blaze of congratulations and glory, nor does he feel that truth is outraged if he goes to work next day for a firm across the street.

An employee of a large Chinese company observed from certain changes in the office barometer that it might be well for him to fold up his tent like the Arab in the poem. He therefore sent a letter to the board of directors asking for a leave of absence. The reply nominated him for the Hall of Fame and recoiled like a man picking up a telephone receiver during a thunderstorm at the thought of his possible departure.

## FACE CONSERVATION

---

A second letter brought a similar reply, but the fatal third acquiesced to his request under great pressure and granted him the leave. As a matter of fact, the first missive demanding that he remain was a hint of dismissal, for if the company had meant to retain him, etiquette would require that it make no official reply whatever. The question would have been discussed informally through a third party.

Perhaps no class of people are let down on more soft and sunlit beds of roses than scribes whose manuscripts are being rejected by a Chinese publication. American authors receive a printed slip remarking with telegraphic curtness that the contribution is "unavailable." A typical Chinese rejection form tells the writer that the office thought his masterpiece ravishingly beautiful, that it deserves to rank with the greatest classics, and that the only reason it is not used is because the publication does not wish to discourage its more humble contributors by printing such an incomparable pearl. The Western author who received such an answer would be down at eight o'clock the next morning with another manuscript, but the Chinese writer, schooled in the art of

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

verbal indirectness, reads between the characters a few remarks not included in the script.

The process of saving face blossoms at its fullest in national politics. A historic instance concerns the time when the Empress-Dowager caught Yuan Shih-k'ai stealing forbidden doughnuts in the political pantry and published an edict giving him indefinite leave of absence on account of trouble with his leg. Yuan thanked the Empress-Dowager for her consideration; then stepped down from his position as military director of Chihli province to nurse his supposedly weak pedal. When the Revolution of 1911 broke, however, a frightened Imperial House hurriedly asked Yuan to assume his old duties. In a reply as polished as a Dutch door knob, Yuan answered that he would be glad to do so, but unfortunately his "leg trouble" was not yet over.

Another instance is seen in Peking, where, in the most secluded preserves of the Forbidden City, the young Emperor keeps up a shadowy court with the pomp of the ancient Imperial House. Paid retainers bump their heads on the floor in his presence—at so much per bump—and listen with deep respect to edicts written on bright yellow paper, which they later file with

## FACE CONSERVATION

---

the janitor to help tide over the coal shortage.

Officials who displeased the court in the days of the Empire received notice that they had been vested with the honor of the piece of white silk. This honor was what in legal parlance might be known as a suspended sentence, for it was the recipient's move to choose a convenient beam out of haunting range of the palace. Even those who failed to return the right kind of R.S.V.P. and were therefore executed by the state met death wearing the full regalia of office. Before the fall of the sword, they bowed in the direction of the Imperial Palace and thanked the Emperor for his kind attention.

The movement for face conservation means that even suspected thieves are spared accusations that might wound their feelings. The servant who is suspected of tastes in jewelry too similar to the family's is always discharged for having lost the valuables through carelessness.

Fear of losing face follows a Chinese more persistently than his shadow. If he dies in a Western country, his remains must be shipped back to China, otherwise his ghost will lose face by having to mingle with haughty foreign ghosts who are probably trying to introduce oriental

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

exclusion laws into the spirit world. He who loses his life may find it on another planet, but he who loses his face either here or hereafter has about as much chance of discovering it again as a person has of relocating a dollar bill which he dropped on Nanking Road.



## XV. LUGGAGE MYSTERIES

It is high time for an Oriental philosopher to take up the question of the multiplication of luggage. Savants of the Middle Ages, when pondering over the problem of interest, wondered long how money could increase itself and finally decided that it was the work of the devil. Bachelors doing their own housekeeping have been puzzled likewise by the tendency of one little pan of beans to overflow into every other receptacle in the kitchen during the mere process of cooking. Amateur chemists have been startled by the expansive tendency of anhydrous salts upon contact with water, and residents of China who hired one cook have frequently been astonished to find six people living in the kitchen.

But nobody, not even Einstein, has looked into the ability of a trunk and two suitcases to expand their contents during one short journey so that half a dozen wicker receptacles are necessary to carry home the overflow. A suitcase that departed alone usually returns followed by a number of smaller carriers, like a prideful cat with a

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

file of new kittens. We have heard, of course, that heat expands and cold contracts, but even that principle hardly explains the difficulty of making a modest summer wardrobe fit the receptacles in which it first left home. Anyway, we have not noticed that the problem is any simpler in winter.

There are various methods of packing, of course, depending on the temperament of the packer and the amount of his luggage. Some people merely have to button their coats and their trunk is locked. Others use the direct action method of opening their suitcases on the floor, dumping in the contents of their bureau drawers, sitting on them to bring the clasps together, and locking them triumphantly at last with half a collar and several shoe strings dangling from the bottom.

On the other hand, one finds individuals who have cretonne bags for everything from tooth-brushes to the bottle of hair-restorer, whose wardrobe trunks are little shrines kept sacred from the defilement of unloving hands, and who know the location of every handkerchief as accurately as a Shanghai resident can trace the stopping-places of an errant mosquito. Usually these

## LUGGAGE MYSTERIES

---

individuals are feminine, but the masculine gender is not entirely immune.

There is another class of travelers who pass their luggage over to a professional packer, to receive it back in due course with a neat type-written list telling the location of each object. There are decided drawbacks in this system. For instance, can you imagine a person in an urgent hurry to find the bottle of Mother Sill's Seasick Remedy pausing over a coded chart of his possessions? Or the predicament of one who, with only fifteen minutes in which to dress for a dinner party, finds that he has misplaced the list? Besides, it is always the professional packer's client who returns with the scientifically packed luggage expanded into three Chinese laundry baskets and a wicker trunk. The same thing often happens to sojourners in the East whose baggage was originally arranged by a loving mother.

Many and curious are the sufferings of luggage in China. Travelers are herded off the train in Antung at five o'clock in the morning to let a person in a baggy uniform take an interested glimpse of their possessions, or else they stand patiently in the customs sheds at Shanghai, waiting for the absolving flourish of white chalk. We

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

don't know just why it is, but customs men always elect to open the suitcase with the week's wash on top, especially if there are lots of bystanders.

Then there is the hazard of crossing the Yangtze at Pukow, when coolies lightly toss the trunks over a channel of turgid water between the boat and the shore. The surviving luggage is then submitted to a course of Swedish massage at the hands of expert baggage smashers, after which it is left on a station platform in the rain. By the time it reaches its destination, the atmosphere inside suggests the parlor of the House of the Seven Gables. Everything has gone into the business of raising moss.

One reason for the expansion of baggage is the practical impossibility of throwing away anything. If you leave an article behind, somebody always ships it by parcel post, and if you try to discard anything openly somebody always persuades you that it could be dyed, made over, or retrimmed, so you always put it back again. You know perfectly well that you'll never take the time to have it refurbished, but you replace it anyhow and you never succeed in throwing it away again.

Perhaps this principle of the expansion of luggage worries foreigners chiefly because they try

## LUGGAGE MYSTERIES

---

to fight it. The Chinese, with true Oriental philosophy, succumb to the inevitable and accumulate luggage with happy abandon, traveling always with half a dozen hampers, a few crates, and several blue and white wash-basins.

The most tantalizing thing about the inordinate enlargement of luggage is that after you get it all unpacked you find that you haven't a thing to wear.

## XVI. NOBODY LOVES A CHINESE TAILOR

MARK TWAIN stated once that this earth is an insane asylum for the other planets. Certain Eastern religious cults say that it is a purgatory where those who sinned in some dim blue world of space are sent to expiate their past. We incline to the latter belief, for otherwise we cannot quite account for the existence of the mosquito, the Gila monster, the man who is learning to play the cornet, the Imagist poet who compares the rising sun to an egg in the frying pan of the sky, and Chinese tailors.

Especially Chinese tailors. When the recent arrival finds that the amah parked a flat iron on her best gown while exchanging reminiscences with the coolie about the old home in Ningpo, that she cleaned another gown with linseed oil under the impression that it was Carbona, and that she had chosen a militant typhoon as the occasion for airing a strictly non-washable pussy-willow taffeta, the previously mentioned newcomer becomes a bit concerned about the clothes problem.

## NOBODY LOVES A CHINESE TAILOR

---

After visiting a few shops and assuring the salesladies who mentioned prices that she wanted to buy a dress and not the store, she is usually led to one side by an older resident who tells her the most popular fairy-tale in the Far East next to Little Red Riding Hood.

"Why don't you go to a Chinese tailor?" inquires the O. R. "All you have to do is show him a picture in a fashion magazine and he'll copy it right off."

With the same naïve credulity which she showed in earlier years when somebody told her that angels pushed the clouds around, or that rain was caused by wash day in heaven, the newcomer accepts the tale of the O. R. and begins to expiate a few more sins committed on Neptune or somewhere.

There must be something in the by-laws of the Chinese Garment Misfitters' Association that prohibits a tailor from appearing on the scene until he has broken two appointments. The tailor who called the first time he promised would probably lose his social standing in the guild and be fined two yards of georgette crepe, purloined from his last afternoon gown.

When he does make his début at last, he always

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

arrives when company is being entertained at tea or when his victim has just fifteen minutes in which to meet a steamer.

With the weapons of his trade wrapped up in a bed sheet, the hero of "lady neck-muff, skin-clothes, fine sew and embroidery can do fashion or otherwise" gives the catalogue illustration a bored glance. He then whisks out a perfectly plain tape-measure, whirls it around a few minutes like a lariat, whisks it back again, puts the material in the bed sheet, murmurs "Al' light. Come Tuesday," and vanishes kichenward to collect some family tobacco from the houseboy.

We don't know just what the tape-measure has to do with the proceeding. He never notes down any figures from it, and the subsequent garment certainly bears no relationship to his investigation.

On the occasion of the first trial, the Celestial dressmaker shakes out the material and informs the customer that he "no has enough."

We venture to guess that from the day when they had the cornerstone ceremonies for the building of the first pagoda, no Chinese tailor ever had enough. After adding liberally to his supply, the client fondly expects as many scraps as there



## NOBODY LOVES A CHINESE TAILOR

would be in the room of an American flag factory where they cut out the stars.

But there never are any scraps, except the one precipitated by the customer when his suspicions are aroused. We have looked with interest for tailors' children, expecting them to be dressed in combinations of gold brocade, pink taffeta, and a few splashes of green georgette. But the few we have noted seem to be as conservatively arrayed as a lady about to address a missionary meeting. Our only remaining theory is that tailors' wives are passionately addicted to crazy quilts.

The explosion of the belief that there is no Santa Claus is as naught beside the disillusionment of the newcomer when he sees the gown which the tailor copied from a picture. Sleeves suffering from a compound fracture at the shoulder, gathers where no gathers belong, and snappers scattered with lavish hands make the customer think that she must have made a mistake and given him a drawing by a noted Cubist. Incidentally Chinese tailors like to sew on snappers almost as much as their chauffeur brothers enjoy tooting the Klaxon. This fact accounts for the long and weary waits suffered by escorts when they call for young ladies in Shanghai.

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

After inspection in the mirror, during which the tailor gathers up a handful of the dress in back so it will seem to fit smoothly over the shoulders, the customer sadly murmurs "Can do" and hopes that the folks won't meet her in San Francisco before she has a chance to acquire some new clothes.

In due course she receives a bill for "Green Lady Dress Make, Jongee Klepe," and she pays it with her mind on the Biblical verse, "As they sew, so must we rip."

## XVII. THE TROUBLES OF SHANGHAI ROMEOS

DID you ever try repairing an automobile tire in a small country town, without proper tools and with a crowd of open-mouthed residents who watched every movement by bending over and jerking up again whenever you did?

Being a Romeo in Shanghai is a good deal like that. First there is the lack of proper facilities, and second there is that pitiless publicity and absorbing interest of the community which makes an affair of the heart as easily concealable as a fire on Nanking Road. The man who thought that his cardiac affliction was known to no one except the party of the second part finds himself and his emotion surrounded by a crowd of bystanders, all as interested in his new experience as the country wights in the damaged tire.

In speaking of the absent Romeo facilities, we did not refer especially to balconies. Balconies as a feature of romance have rather gone out anyway, except the balconies where the soda clerk and his lady hold hands as they watch the stock

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

company play "Way Down East." The average man figures that he'd be foolish to stand on the lawn under the balcony when there is a place for him on the veranda with a sofa pillow and free parking space for his straw hat.

With the passing of the balcony has gone also the gentle art of serenading. Most men nowadays can't play anything but a phonograph, anyway, and we doubt if even the most ardent of medieval troubadours would have done much troubadouring if he had been obliged to carry a Victrola under his arm. Besides, there is always the danger of playing the wrong side of the record and rendering some passé lyric such as "I Love My Wife But Oh, You Kid!" when the intention pointed to Schubert's Serenade.

Hence, though a serenader under a lady's window in Shanghai would rapidly become surrounded by an interested audience of ricksha coolies, gentlemen accompanied by itinerant fruit stalls, and the blue-clad chaperons of perambulating candy stores, the fact is not especially damaging from a romantic standpoint.

But there are other features in which Shanghai is woefully lacking. The first, as we have remarked, is a decent amount of emotional privacy.

## THE TROUBLES OF SHANGHAI ROMEOS

In New York the love affair of a bank clerk and the little girl who is listed on a company's books as a secretary is known only to a yawning elevator boy who wishes they'd hurry up and finish saying good night so that he can go to sleep again.

In Shanghai, where everybody lives in glass houses complicated by X-rays, parties are always arranged on a wholesale basis. Couples are lost sight of in a crowd, but if Mary Jones and John Smith try "twosing it" at the Carlton or elsewhere, their entrance could not be much more remarked if they were preceded by a brass band. Therefore John and Mary join a crowd and watch the life of the party do stunts with matches between dances, their appreciation seeming a bit dim and their manner strangely distracted.

Another pourer of sand into the mechanism of romance is the Shanghai boarding house. Most of them own no parlors, and those that do are afflicted either by a ten o'clock closing law or a number of sociable boarders with a marked dislike for their own rooms.

Consider, too, the absence of shady lanes and woodland nooks. There are a few leaf-arched streets in Shanghai, but strollers are usually accompanied by a bevy of ricksha men looking for

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

trade if possible, but willing to accept entertainment as a substitute.

There are just a few poetic spots outside the city. Perched comfortably on a grave-mound, Romeo and Juliet may begin the opening stanzas of the "When-did-you-first-come-to-love-me?" duet, but before they progress to the second verse, the grave-mound is surrounded by children with jaws ajar, some because of open-mouthed interest and others on account of adenoids. They are followed perhaps by a deputation from the Beggars' Guild or maybe part of the Chinese army comes out to begin its diurnal bugle practice. In any case, the size of the crowd soon becomes such that passersby look for the fire engines.

The real salvation of the Shanghai suitor is the moving picture theater. There, soothed by the flickerings of the silver screen, Romeo and Juliet forget the boarders, the ricksha coolies and the inquisitive crowds in the cafés. It is usually surprising to strangers how many soft, purring conversations go on during the running of a film and the superb indifference to the picture manifested by a fair share of the audience.

At home society raises its lorgnette when an eligible couple are seen dancing together often.

## THE TROUBLES OF SHANGHAI ROMEOS

Unless the couple appear without a party, Shanghai ignores this symptom. It may mean only that they find each other suitable dancing partners, with little mutual interest off the ballroom floor. The real test in Shanghai is: Do they go to the movies together?

Somehow, with the aid of the cinemas and the chit books, Romeo muddles through. The Shanghai-wooded lady has few romantic situations to look back upon, perhaps, but then nobody can tell that by looking at her wedding ring.

## XVIII. SEE THE CHINESE BIRDIES

FOR some obscure racial reason, Chinese have no fondness for pets except in cages. Any one who knows Oriental cities is acquainted with the dreary procession of half-scalded dogs that nose hopelessly through the streets, apparently nursing the impression that the world's hand is against them. A Chinese gentleman would be as likely to go for a walk with a dog as a foreigner would of leading out an obese porker. Cats in China are mostly unpettable beasts of extreme pessimistic tendencies and a hoarse voice that combines the soothing qualities of an applied file with an auctioneer suffering from sore throat.

Put the pet in a cage, however, and the entire scene changes. While the household dog mopes around the coolie quarters, the family bird and its ivory-trimmed cage accompanies the master on a stroll to the tea gardens, where it is hung up in a tree to exchange points on singing with the feathered coloratura sopranos of the neighborhood.

Every gentleman owning two or more birds



## SEE THE CHINESE BIRDIES

---

has a bird coolie to catch grasshoppers for them, take them out for air, and carry them off for their singing lesson in case the master is otherwise occupied. Cages are decorated with bits of carving or pieces of jade, and they are always discreetly curtained at back and sides to provide the bird with a fitting amount of privacy. Birds are occasionally taken out with a string tied to a foot, permitting the owner to reel his pet in like a trout when it exhibits any tendency toward undue skittishness.

Any one passing the Shanghai Race Course between the fag end hours of five and seven o'clock in the morning, is certain to notice the hundreds of bird cages that usually line the railing. Some of them are chaperoned by a coolie or a small boy of the family; others are apparently without duennas of any description, but all of them are being fresh-aired with a fidelity that is never applied to Chinese babies.

A bird on the way to its singing lesson is unaccompanied by a music-roll, but in case it goes to a professional teacher, its master has a bill to meet on the first of the month, just like the iceman whose daughter is learning to sing "Mother Machree" at fifty cents a lesson. Owners of

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

birds that are exceptionally fine singers often charge a fee for the privilege of parking other cages near the prima donna. In the Native City a small sum is asked of those who hang cages in the trees by the Willow Tea House. Owners who have not selected special teachers merely set their warbler in the midst of other trillers and trust to its judgment to pick good singing from bad.

This system, it seems to us, could be applied with considerable success to foreign households. If all young ladies in Shanghai with vocal ambitions could be set down in the Race Course between the hours of 5:00 and 7:00 A.M., each one to sing her own tune and copy whatever she pleased from the others, it would save her neighbors much profanity and the family a large bill for vocal culture.

Bird Street in the Native City is the Times Square of the feathered community. Birds of every size from an unshelled peanut to the papier mâché eagles at Fourth of July celebrations chirp, twitter, squawk, and trill through the length of the thoroughfare. It is also on Bird Street that one finds the bird doctors and the expert dietitians who take one look at a feathered customer and prescribe his diet down to the ultimate worm. At

## SEE THE CHINESE BIRDIES

---

frequent intervals along the street are to be seen the venders of cocoons with a worm in residence that the caged gourmets find particularly toothsome, that is, if anything can be toothsome to a bird.

The dean of Chinese ornithology is the so-called "Hundred Spirits Lark" from Mongolia. Another favorite bird is the "spectacle thrush," so-called because of the black lines around its eyes which suggest the uniform of a Phi Beta Kappa. Though there are many native breeds of "white swallows," known to the West as canaries, they were formerly imported in large numbers from Germany. The reputation of the owl for wisdom is not sustained in the East, the Chinese regarding it as a half-witted bird with dark tendencies toward cannibalism. Doves are considered lacking in will-power and completely under the claw of the feminine gender. It is a Chinese belief that the dove husband always sends his wife away from the nest when rain begins and takes care of the family while she keeps herself dry under eaves.

Buying birds from itinerant venders or from stalls in the Native City is somewhat like picking up genuine jade at the Thieves' Market. There have been cases of neat little yellow canaries

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

which, after being taken home, twittered in a peculiarly coarse manner, broke out in spots like gray measles, and finally proved to be one hundred per cent sparrow under a coating of yellow paint.

There are several species of Chinese chickens that are almost as different from the common or garden-scratching variety as a hen is from an incubator. Among the interesting types are the famous frizzled chickens with a coating of what appears to be curly wool and a reputation for fitting in artistically with the marcel waved rocks of Chinese gardens.

One of the most popular varieties of native chicken is the stiff white type that sits rigidly aloft on the coffin at Chinese funerals and serves as the steed on which the soul rides across running water in its journey to the Oriental Avalon.

## XIX. WINTERING IN THE FAR EAST

DURING the rush of Christmas week, when everybody is busy erasing price marks on outgoing presents and looking for them on gifts coming in, when a favorite pastime is emergency hunts for last year's Christmas cards that hadn't been written on, and when gift boxes of candy are being dispatched unopened to other addresses, a distinguished visitor arrives in China. Nobody notes his coming among the foreign community, but during the next two months he is a favorite topic of conversation between acts, tram stops, jazz numbers, jack pots, and intervals of building the wall.

The newcomer is Mr. Winter Solstice, B. C. (Bachelor of Chilblains), and according to the Chinese calendar, he unloads the refrigerators, which he carries around for wardrobe trunks, on the twenty-second of December. Chinese mildly observe the day by giving presents to the dead, which, it seems to us, has advantages over our habit of remembering only the quick and the half-dead. The departed at least do not embarrass the

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

donors by returning a present, discovering that it didn't come from the shop that its box would indicate; they don't write notes thanking you for the lovely handkerchiefs when you gave them note paper; and they have never been known to give you the identical present as a mah-jong prize two months later.

In China the dead acknowledge the visit of the almond-eyed Santa Claus by a faint puff at the red ancestral candles and then subside into ghostly quiescence until the next solstice rolls around. The coming of the winter season is the signal for the departed to crawl back into their resting places, pull the grave-mounds up around their ears, and trust that the descendants will have sense enough to burn a few paper hot-water bottles for their use in the next world.

It is our theory that every house in Shanghai was built in August. Consider the high arched ceilings, the rooms large enough to serve as skating rinks, French windows that really can't be French because no Frenchman would stand for that much fresh air, and vasty hallways that couldn't be kept warm by half a dozen blast furnaces. Consider the usual total absence of steam-heat, the starved little grates that hard-

## WINTERING IN THE FAR EAST

---

hearted contractors force to work before they have really grown up, and walls as innocent of any openings for stove-pipes as a cat is of a liking for lemonade. Nobody ever put up a house like that in January. It could have been done only under the urge of tropic rays dancing a tarantella on the top of a pith helmet.

Contractors in China evidently served their apprenticeship under June bugs. They alone among the population of the Far East, suffer from a delusion that is almost universal among the untraveled hordes at home—the delusion that it is always summer in the Orient. Every missionary group can tell tales of a new arrival appearing in December with a full stock of linen suits and pith helmets, having given away his flannels and heavy coats to the Salvation Army previous to embarkation. In such cases there is always a hasty shopping expedition, while the newcomer sits in his boarding-house room swathed in a couple of blankets.

As a matter of fact, there are few spots on the globe with more hard-working, conscientious frigidity than is found in northern and central China. It is true that when the mercury in the thermometer stands at 38° at home, it is an occasion merely

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

for an extra muffler. When it stands at that figure in China, it is a time for wearing a fur coat to bed and for adding a garnish of six hot-water bottles arranged according to the Anglo-Saxon principle of doing the greatest good to the greatest number of square inches.

Foreigners living in the Orient have made a few feeble efforts to compensate for the lack of steam heat. There are small charcoal braziers, for instance, which some of the old residents bring to church with them, velvet shoes lined with fur which few women have the courage to wear because of the extra territory it allots to their feet, foot muffs which are as popular in rickshas as a red pepper at a Mexican party, and little charcoal receptacles about the size of cigarette cases, which are ignited inside and then distributed among coat pockets.

The Japanese first invented these vest-pocket stoves and they have been taken up with enthusiasm by all foreigners who enjoy cheerful glows over the region of the heart and other points of the compass.

The Chinese, whose houses are usually as cozy as the inside of Grant's Tomb, solve the heat question by donning extra clothes until they look





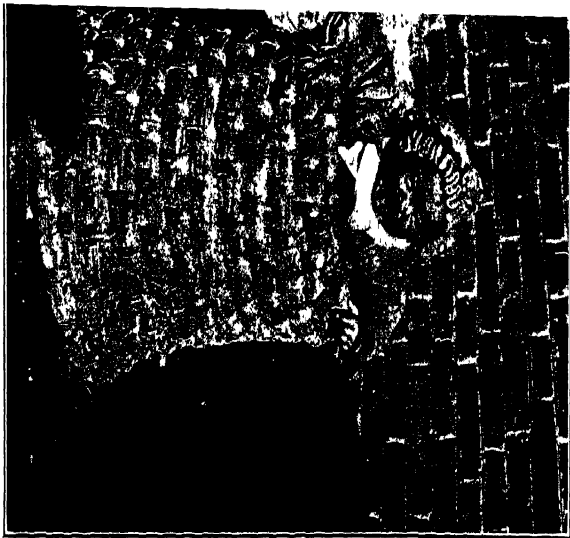
stawsye ihny sbblecisteq.

stawsye ihny sbblecisteq.

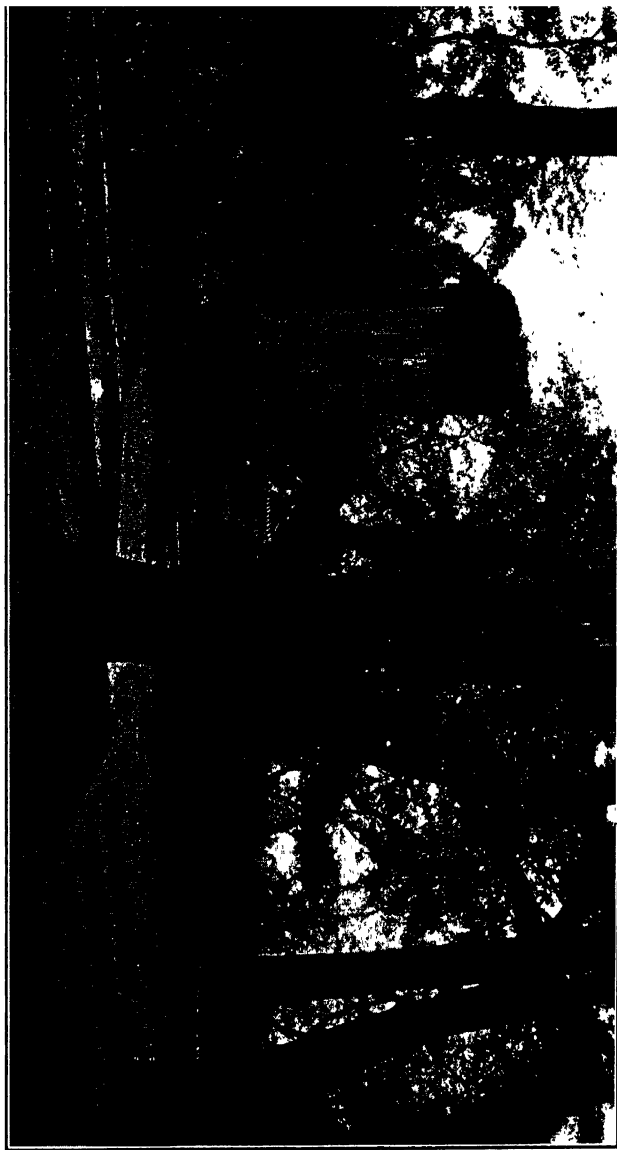
The nonlevelisipic psryl-psaket is not



Young China q'asaca mb tot a bairty.



The Grave of Confucius' s soul of brightness for nearly twenty-five hundred years.





## WINTERING IN THE FAR EAST

---

like walking delegates of the Garment Makers' Union. A chilly day is described as "four coats cold"; a very chilly one is known as "five coats cold." Chinese children at this season of the year have been so carefully padded by conscientious parents that they are the same height lying down as they are standing up. Any one of them could fall down five flights of stairs without damaging anything except his reputation for peace and quiet.

Though the Winter Solstice arrives in December the most severe cold is not felt until January. Coming events cast their shadows in the form of straw hula skirts on the hydrants, elephant blankets on the automobile radiators, knitted scarves wound around the chapped and gloveless hands of Chinese women, and baby hot-water bottles negligently caressed by the sing-song girls.

The time soon comes when to take an inventory of a person's wardrobe, you need only look on his bed, because he will be sleeping under everything he owns. As for us, the winter in Shanghai always weakens our sympathy for some of the early Christian martyrs. We have reached the conclusion that St. Lawrence had a pretty good time on his gridiron after all.

## XX. THE JADE CRAZE

OUR very first memory of school concerns a heavy green bracelet which we proudly told the rest of the class was jade and which the teacher finally wouldn't let us wear because it banged so hard on the desk. If we remember rightly, we finally traded it off to another little girl in return for a jumping-rope and a bag full of buttons that she had culled at leisure from the family wardrobe.

Since coming to China, however, and pricing two little green globules in a bed of white cotton, we are rather sorry that we traded off that bracelet as we did. We should at least have held out for a second bag of buttons. Of course, the fact that the bracelet chipped every time it struck anything harder than blotting-paper might have hurt its social standing in the eyes of a connoisseur. But then it was quite as good jade as many of the specimens for which travelers overdraw their letters of credit in the Far East.

A cynical botany professor once responded to a query of ours by remarking that the only way

## THE JADE CRAZE

---

to tell the difference between a mushroom and a toadstool was to eat the specimen in question. If you lived, it was a mushroom; if you died, it was a toadstool. The only trouble with this system was that the knowledge wouldn't do you any future good. We don't remember hearing in Sunday school that there are any mushrooms in Heaven.

There are elements of similarity in the test for telling good jade from a clever imitation. The only certain method is to apply a file. If it files readily it is probably as false as the seal on a spy's passport; if the filing requires a little real pressure, the jade is more likely to be genuine. There are few shopkeepers broad-minded enough, however, to beam benignly on the gentleman who produces a file and starts to work on a vase or necklace. Taking the object home after purchase and practicing on it in privacy in one's boudoir is rather an expensive evening pastime. Thus jade usually keeps the secret of its past until the point in the third act when the villain strides in, picks it off the mantel, and exclaims, "Good Lord, man, you didn't pay real money for that, did you?"

Of course, ascertaining that the article is real jade doesn't prove very much. We could demon-

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

strate even without trying to file him, that the dog next door is a real dog and not an imitation, but that fact wouldn't win him any ribbons at a bench show. There is mongrel jade just as there are mongrel canines.

The best jade according to Chinese connoisseurs, is the translucent apple-green variety of even color and without traces of murkiness. A short string of perfectly matched beads will retail for the unassuming little price of \$10,000 up. The encyclopedia, we noted recently, calls jade a semi-precious stone. We have never felt the same toward the encyclopedia since.

This little touch of statistics recalls to mind the remarks made by kind friends while we stood with one foot on the gangplank and the other mixed up somehow with the fruit in a steamer basket.

"Oh, by the way," said the k.f., "while you are over there, get me some jade, won't you? I'd like a string of beads and a bracelet, and there's a man I know who has an awfully cute little jade god. Just get them and let me know how much, and I'll send a check, if they use money in China. Now good-by and I hope you're vaccinated. Lots of people die of smallpox over there. Have a pleasant trip."



## THE JADE CRAZE

---

The scenario ends, of course, with the sending of a little charm made of white filigreed soap-stone, which is just as well, as the only check received consists of a picture postcard showing the monkey cage in the zoo at Oshkosh or somewhere.

To any one who has visited Jade Street in Canton and seen the great slabs of stone awaiting the cutter's tools, the high price of jade seems the grossest example of profiteering since the sugar scandal. But it happens that though jade comes in the form of marble blocks sufficiently large to furnish raw material for several cemetery angels, a whole hillside may not supply enough of the flawless translucent variety for a pair of earrings.

Though jade is China's queen among stones, practically none of it comes from within the borders of the republic. Burma and Indo-China are the chief centers of export. Jade is rather widely distributed through the world, being found in New Zealand, Silesia, Alaska, and the Rocky Mountain region of the United States. The Chinese, however, have such a prejudice against any found outside the traditional source of supply that a shipload of jade from New Zealand had no market whatever in Canton.

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

The first cutting is effected by saws over which water is kept running. Fine carving is accomplished by the use of tools dipped in ruby dust, black emery being employed for work of a lower grade. So highly is the trade of a jade artisan esteemed that an apprentice in Canton serves five years without pay before becoming a journeyman of even the humblest class.

One of the most flowery of Chinese compliments is the use of jade as an adjective. Hence a gentleman inquiring after the infant of another remarks, "How is your jade baby?" Invitation for another visit may take the form of the question, "When shall we again see your jade foot?" Personally, we have never seen a jade foot, but we have often been stepped on by one while dancing.

When it comes to determining the real value of jade, however, we must confess that we are a better judge of quadratic equations. But then we have seen so much of it out here, real and near real, that our taste for jade has become a trifle jaded.

## XXI. PIDGIN ENGLISH AS A LIBERAL EDUCATION

WHEN people asked us how many languages we spoke, we used to include French along with English and the argot of New York. As a matter of fact, we didn't know English then, as it is only since leaving home that we have learned how to pronounce "gaol."

A visit to Paris, during which we ordered fried eggs and were served with radishes rather disillusioned us in regard to our French. Hereafter, if any one becomes curious about our linguistic acquirements, we acknowledge French only if we are certain that nobody in the party can speak it. If some one airs an unexpected knowledge, we hasten to assure them that though we read and write it fluently, our conversational experience has been limited to New York head waiters born in Pittsburgh and to countering "Ouvrez la fenêtre" with "Fermez la porte," in French 1. A.

But some time after our return to the United States we are going to order something we don't want and when the waiter brings it, we are going

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

to say, "Maskee." When our friends ask us what language that is, we are going to flick at a crumb with a paper napkin and say "Portuguese." We won't be telling the truth, of course, for though the Chinese blame "maskee" on the Portuguese, the Portuguese always deny it. "Maskee" is a foundling word left on China's doorstep by some irresponsible foreign influence, which went its own way without even leaving a locket for identification.

Then we go on to make some remark about "chow" and when our friends ask us what language that is from, we will nonchalantly break a toothpick in half and reply, "Chinese." After our friends—if we have any left by that time—recover from the second shock, we'll make some remark about "sabe" and then admit, while calmly putting dice marks on cube sugar, that the word was originally Spanish. We're planning to break up the party finally by upsetting a finger-bowl and telling the waiter to bring a towel chop-chop, meanwhile remarking that the expression is derived from the tongue known as "pidgin English."

This is only a brief indication of how much time people waste in studying a number of languages. One can get just as good a reputation



## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

Hab got water, velly wide!

Maskee! My wantchee go topside!"

Excelsior!

"Man-man," one girlie talkee he,

"What for you go topside, look see?"

And all time more he plenty cly;

But all time walkee still more high.

Excelsior!

And so it goes to the tragic end, featuring a cold hand, a snow-drift, a St. Bernard, and some mangled English.

Pidgin English grew up in Macao and Canton during the era when tea-clippers were many and language teachers few. It is a language which developed by common consent, with expediency taking precedence over linguistic beauty. The word "pidgin" itself is said to be an attempt to pronounce the Cantonese word for "business." "Chow" resembles "chu fan" which in the Mandarin dialect means "to eat rice." "Chop-chop" and "maskee" are hidden in the dim mists that cover the early foreign settlement of China, the nearest relation of "maskee" being a Cantonese phrase which might be Anglicized to "Mow sze gon" and which means, "Nothing going on." Whatever its origin, "maskee" is an important

contribution to the "I-should-worry" vocabulary of the world, deserving to rank with "Cui bono?", "Nichevo," and "Ca ne fait rien" in the dictionary of irresponsibility and the gentle art of avoiding trouble for one's self.

The foreign lady issuing orders to the lowly person who makes beds and puts on the baby's clothes would be rather shocked to know that she was addressing the betrousered servitor as "Mother." Yet that is the meaning of "amah" in practically all Chinese dialects, the word having been learned first by foreign children put in the care of Chinese nurses and thus transmitted to older members of the family.

Vowel endings attached themselves to such words as "wantchee" and "catchee" because of the Chinese fondness for drawing a word out like an accordion. To change the metaphor, Chinese find it practically impossible to step on the brakes when they come to the last letter; if it is a consonant they always skid on it and slide along to a vowel.

The houseboy's phrases about "two piecee missee" and "one piecee hot bath" are related to the Chinese necessity for a qualifier. As any one who has ever studied Chinese will sorrowfully

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

acquiesce, these qualifiers vary according to the type of object. There is one for long, thin objects, another for round flat objects, and so on through the whole list of earthly possessions. Chinese speaking pidgin English missed a classifier as much as a jazz-band would a drummer, and accordingly "piecee" was mobilized and put into service.

Pidgin English, say the old China hands, has deteriorated during recent years into something almost intelligible. Where, they lament, is the "sabe-box" around which the servant wound his queue or the "chow-box" which was the center of his internal domestic arrangements? Gone, both of them, along with twelve-inch finger-nails and examination halls and sailing ships that came around the Horn. In Indo-China, pidgin French is also reforming itself, though wine there is still called "Ankor" as a memento of the thirstiness of the early settlers and their habit of encoring the order.

Like the mother who heroically announces, "We're never going to talk baby-talk to the baby; we think it's bad for his sense of dignity," is the newcomer to the Far East who says, "I won't speak pidgin English. It is not complimentary to the Chinese and it prevents them from learning



## PIDGIN ENGLISH

---

the language correctly." But after a few wrestlings with the native comprehension in the style of H. G. Wells, the upholder of the King's English decides that the path of a literary leader in China is a thorny one, beset by unblackened shoes, unfound collars, and unwarmed baths.

We used to be opposed to pidgin English likewise, but when we go home, we shan't be at all surprised to find ourselves leaning on a counter and remarking to an elaborately coiffured lady, "My wantchee catchee piecee silk, allee samee sample. Can pay look see, chop-chop?"

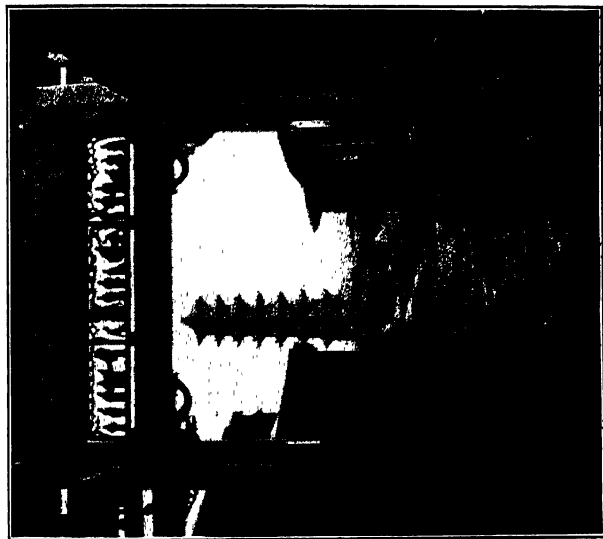
And some day, if we attend a Shakespearian revival, we shall expect to see a gentleman in black enter somberly, place himself in heavy chair, lay a thin finger against a hollow cheek, and solemnly, begin "Can do, or no can do—how fashion?"

## XXII. CHINA'S SKYSCRAPERS

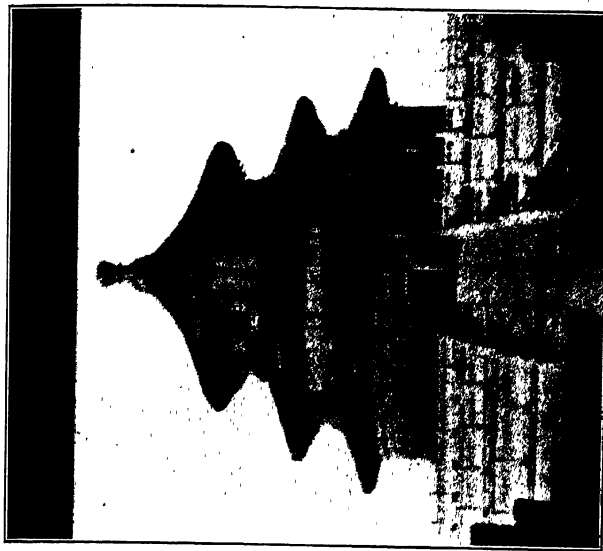
To the list of such questions as "How old is Ann?" "How long is a piece of string?" and "How is a mouse when it spins?" foreign residents of China are inclined to add, "Why is a pagoda?"

In the eyes of people with purely utilitarian leanings, the pagoda ranks in usefulness with a whip socket on an automobile, or the fluted paper trimmings on a hotel chop. If it could be put into service as the background for an electric sign advertising hosiery or chewing gum, or else used for the attachment of sirens to call out the Fire Department, there might be something to it. But when the foreigner with a commercial angle on the scenery finds that the natives aren't even enthusiastic about employing it as a signboard for cigarette posters, he concludes that the Chinese have far to go before they reach the vast and lofty heights of Western civilization.

Over in Japan we were told that the pagoda idea originated from the custom of carrying one umbrella on top of the other over the heads of officials. The more prominent a man was, the more



The pagoda, built originally in India, has become a characteristic of the Chinese landscape.



The blue-tiled Temple of Heaven is one of the most beautiful legacies of the Empire.



## CHINA'S SKYSCRAPERS

---

umbrellas he had. If a man went down the street with eight umbrellas in America, he would soon be telling the desk sergeant his middle name, but in ancient Japan when officials went calling, people could only clear out the hatracks and hope for the best.

In China, however, we heard that pagodas were built originally after Indian models in order to house the relics of the Buddha. Judging from the number of relics distributed about the East, the divinity in question was endowed with a hundred or two complete skeletons and enough hair to equip a mattress works. Some of the relics, however, are second-hand; Buddhist priests and nuns of particular sanctity often being honored by having a fragment of their chief stored temporarily in the cranium. During life the sacred morsel endows them with a halo and after death it may be secured by the devout through the simple process of burning their bones.

The bit that remains intact after the cremation is part of the Buddha's duplex skeleton and therefore rates a pagoda.

Though considered by most foreigners to be completely typical of China, pagodas were not introduced until 300 A. D. and hence are com-

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

parative innovations. In some dialects they are still spoken of as "foreign buildings." During the course of the centuries, however, their original purpose was lost sight of to a certain extent and the builders of many of them forgot that they really ought to have one of the Buddha's numerous fibulas for a proper cornerstone.

The belief soon became widespread that pagodas attract prosperity like magnets. They were also credited with a special influence on the spirits of wind and water, serving as an insurance policy against floods, typhoons, or lightning. A town possessing a pagoda could get about fifty per cent more for its building lots and suburban additions than those merely equipped with a few idol shelters. Likewise students from cities owning Chinese Woolworth buildings gained a reputation for higher marks in the literary tests than candidates hailing from the uncut bamboo.

Rated with the Colossus of Rhodes, the Hanging Gardens of Babylon, and New York's Coney Island as one of the Seven Wonders of the World, the Porcelain Pagoda of Nanking was undoubtedly the most famous of China's skyscrapers. Its cost in time was nineteen years and in money about \$3,300,000. Slabs of glazed porcelain in

## CHINA'S SKYSCRAPERS

---

green, red, yellow, and white covered a brick framework of nine stories and 150 bells hung from the roof.

The pagoda was illuminated once a year by 140 lamps. During one evening of brilliance, the lamps used 85 gallons of oil, a fact that is noted with regret by foreign oil companies which didn't have the forethought to settle in China until after the pagoda was destroyed. The real purpose of the illumination, according to Buddhist sages, was to perform a meritorious act by saving the life of fish. By reflecting itself in all adjacent waterways, it frightened the fish into staying far below the surface, prevented the fishermen from catching them, and therefore saved their lives. A similar purpose led to the lighting up of other pagodas, tradition stating that the illumination of a pagoda in Soochow prevented the fish from rising in Taihu Lake thirty li away.

The Porcelain Pagoda was finally blown up by gunpowder in 1856, when certain leaders of the Taiping Rebellion suspected that some of their number were meeting in the building to plan treachery against the cause. It had four precious jewels on its roof—one to protect it against rain, one against fire, one against dust, and another

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

against wind, but somehow the builders forgot to introduce a stone that would vaccinate it against gunpowder.

One of the oldest buildings of the type in China is the Wild Goose Pagoda in Shensi. According to Chinese legend, a number of Buddhist monks were very busy resting one day, when a flock of wild geese flew over their heads. Feeling too exhausted by their occupation to reach for the family blunderbuss, a monk of the party exclaimed, "I wish one of those geese would perform a benevolent act." A goose accordingly fell down dead, and the monks commemorated its willingness to oblige by building a pagoda over it, which seems to us considerably more trouble than using a slingshot in the first place.

Another famous pagoda overlooks the city of Tsinanfu. As late as 1890, missionaries in the city were refused permission to build a two-story hospital on the ground that the structure might cut the invisible cable which anchored the city to the pagoda and therefore cause the town to drift down the Yellow River to the sea.

A pagoda in Soochow is said to have two snakes, one blue and one white, buried in its foundations. Other frequently described buildings



## CHINA'S SKYSCRAPERS

---

of this type are the Loonghwa Pagoda of Shanghai, built in the ninth century, A. D.; a leaning pagoda on the Shanghai Nanking Railroad, with a slant that makes the Tower of Pisa look as straight as the back of an army officer receiving his first salute, and a brick pagoda located near the reputed grave of Mohammed's uncle in Canton, which was used as a minaret for calling China's first Moslem converts to the adoration of Allah.

It is probable, however, that China has built its last pagoda. The Chinese in Macao suggested erecting one in 1820 for furthering the prosperity of the port and the records state that the Portuguese governor contributed a hundred dollars. But the building was never put up nor has the construction of a pagoda elsewhere in China been considered seriously since. Undoubtedly China's pagodas of the future will be straight red shafts, with black smoke smudging the sky.

■

### XXIII. CHINESE JAZZ

WHEN night drops a black blanket on the city and proceeds to tuck it in, and the lights begin to twinkle like the diamonds worn on Foochow Road, Shanghai settles down for an evening interview with Orpheus. In Berkeley, California, they used to have what they called a Half Hour of Music, but in Shanghai it deserves to be known as the Hour of Half Music.

From the tea houses comes a sound as of barrels of dishes being rolled downstairs and trespassing on the terminals of several cats along the way; from rice shops zigzag the drunk and disorderly notes emitted by Chinese phonograph records through red, flowerlike horns; and from many an alley-way stagger the inebriated melodies originated by some lone follower of the Muse—melodies that ought to be locked up for trying to impersonate music.

Occasionally there is a little variation in the concert, such as we noted one evening when we passed a residence occupied by some of the Yellow Perils of the Pacific, and noted Papa Peril, Mamma

## CHINESE JAZZ

---

Peril and Baby Perils all sitting on the floor around a horn, as they listened with rapt attention to the query, "How 'r you Goin' to Keep 'Em Down on the Farm, after They've Seen Paree?"

But as we said before, music is a great institution in Shanghai. As the back area of our house is infested both by cats and Chinese musicians, we don't dare follow our impulses and throw out detached sections of the kitchen range. It happens that we are rather fond of cats.

The music that to the foreign ear deserves to rank in the Criminal Code with arson in the first degree is as harmonious to ears trained to appreciate it as the best numbers of a symphony orchestra. Confucius regarded music as an essential part of the government of a state, its function being to harmonize and soften the relations between different ranks of society. According to Confucius' biographers, he was so struck by a certain tune that he did not taste food for three weeks afterwards.

As far as this sentiment is concerned, we can sympathize with Confucius. We had to listen to a Chinese orchestra during a tiffin party once and we felt just the same way.

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

There are seventy-two different varieties of instruments in the Chinese catalogue of harmony, including seventeen kinds of drums. One treatise on how to beat drums scientifically, which was written about 860 A. D., deserves to be translated for the benefit of modern jazz orchestras. The same essay contains a list of one hundred and twenty-nine symphonies, all of which could be perpetrated by the use of drums alone, with the occasional aid of cowbells and cymbals.

In the days before Shih Huang-ti destroyed learning by a great conflagration of books, Chinese music is believed to have consisted of twelve semi-tones. When the ashes were raked over, only six notes were found to have survived the blaze, and if we may be permitted to shuffle the metaphor, we might remark that Chinese music ever since has been hitting on only half the usual number of cylinders. Some of the more complicated melodies have eight notes, but in the majority of Chinese tunes, the extra two rank merely as promissory.

There is no chromatic scale, harmony and counterpoint are as absent as tiled baths in the interior, and the tunes are not set to any key. In spite of these deficiencies, written music is so complicated

## CHINESE JAZZ

---

that most Chinese prefer to play by ear. In scores for the lute, each note has as many characters as a Sir Walter Scott novel. One denotes the string, another the stud, a third the position of the right hand, a fourth the position of the left, and the fifth tells the performer how to slide his hand when the correct note has been struck. By the time the performer has read all these, the rest of the orchestra is ahead by three bars and six drinks.

The most highly-esteemed instrument in the list of Chinese assaulters of the eardrum is the scholar's lute, a harmony machine four feet long and eighteen inches wide, crossed by seven strings of silk. It is called the "kin," which means to prohibit, because, as one of the sages remarks, "it restrains and checks the passions and corrects the human heart." This goes to prove again that music is only a point of view. Probably the sages could have got a lot of moral uplift out of listening to a donkey engine.

The instrument which does most to make Shanghai the City of Dreadful Night is the two-stringed fiddle, which a Chinese Stradivarius can perpetrate out of a stick of bamboo thrust into a cylinder of the same material, and three idle

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

moments. As the bow must pass through the narrow space between the two strings, the test of skill in playing consists of being able to wield the bow so as not to irritate more than one string at a time. Personally, we think that the fiddle would be greatly improved by the removal of both strings.

A canteen opened on board a transport carrying coolie labor battalions to France made the strategic error of selling Chinese fiddles. Every coolie on board bought one and as early as the third day out all the ventilators were taxed to the limit getting rid of bad airs. Incidentally, more foreign officers went insane in this branch of the service than in any other.

There are as many Chinese instruments of music as there are instruments of torture and both are constructed on the same principle. The catalogue includes an embryo piano consisting of brass wires fastened on a sounding board and played with a hammer; a flute with ten holes, twice the length of a foreign fife; a "crowing lute," with a cocoanut for a body; stone chimes, consisting of pieces of rock hung in a frame; a wooden fish hollowed out inside and patted on the head with a potato-masher; and musical vases,



Only an imaginative Chinese poet could call the Buddhist music  
"heavenly."



A brass band rendition of "A Hot Time in the Old Town To-night"  
is part of every well-regulated funeral.





## CHINESE JAZZ

---

consisting of twelve cups filled with varying quantities of water, which are struck with light rods.

About the only thing that seems to be missing is a cat concertina. This instrument is composed of cats of many sizes, confined in small boxes with apertures for tails. The performer pulls the tail of any sized cat called for in the melody, and thus achieves a range from high treble to bass.

But he who scoffs at Chinese music loses a large contribution of face when he discovers that a Chinese instrument gave Kratzenstein, an organ builder of Petrograd, an idea for perfecting organ stops, to say nothing of being the direct inspiration for the accordion. Kratzenstein's invention was the result of seeing a "sheng," a Chinese instrument composed of a hollow, conical shaped box, with a mouthpiece on each side and thirteen reeds of different length inserted in the top. Though grateful for the organ stops, we fear that if the accordion invention were generally known, all the apartment-house dwellers in America would demand immediate withdrawal from the Disarmament Conference and a general mobilization against Chinese laundries.

A warp of decidedly Western tendencies is weaving itself through the woof of Oriental

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

melody. The new national hymn of the Peking Government is set to the tune of "America." A visiting deputation of prominent Americans was recently greeted by a Chinese band playing "The Star-Spangled Banner," though the visitors failed to remove their hats on account of not recognizing the anthem until it was all over.

In regard to resembling other phases of modern melodies, we are reminded of the following passage by a noted sinologue: "The lo, or gong, is the type of Chinese music. A crashing harangue of rapid blows on this sonorous plate, with a rattling accompaniment of small drums and a crackling symphony of shrill notes from the clarinet and cymbal constitute the chief features of their musical performance."

If anybody ever wrote a more graphic description of a modern jazz band, we didn't happen to read it.

## XXIV. THE UPS AND DOWNS OF SUMMER TRAVEL

TRAVELING off the beaten track in China gives one a deep feeling of kinship with inanimate objects. For instance, we never really appreciated the sentiments of a scrambled egg until we traveled in a Peking cart, and we never regarded as we should the feelings of garden produce suspended from the end of a bamboo pole until we had a ride in a sedan chair.

Those who leave Shanghai for the summer are practically certain to be introduced to one or another of China's speed annihilators that burn up the highway at the rate of two miles an hour, and cause the traveler considerable annoyance by turning out continually to let the snails go by.

All the mountain summer resorts are reached by sedan chair. At one of them passengers are weighed before embarking, and those who register over 150 pounds are required to have three bearers. Judging from the fact that practically everybody is obliged to engage three bearers, we suspect that a coolie desiring occupation negli-

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

gently places one foot on the scales during the weighing process.

Every mountain climb in a sedan chair resolves itself sooner or later into a contest between bearer and passenger on the subject of how much of the distance the latter is willing to walk. After climbing a hundred feet or so, the coolies deposit the chair with a prow-downward motion that suggests the sinking of the *Lusitania* and airily wave their arms up the mountainside to hint to the passenger that the walking is pretty good. As most people are disinclined to hire a sedan chair merely to have it follow them up a mountain, they generally sit tight at this point and indicate in arm-spoken Chinese that if the walking is so good it is time that the bearers set about it.

With many grunts and groans, the coolies shoulder their burden again and begin the second step in the sedan initiation process. As a means of causing the traveler to change his mind, they joggle the resilient bamboo poles and bounce the chair until the occupant feels that he is being tossed in a blanket. If this fails, they introduce a side-sway that is reminiscent of a small boat anchored in a heavy swell and which usually causes the passenger to lose all interest in tiffin. This



Peking carts are the chief reason why travelers should carry arnica.



House boating on Chinese canals is a favorite tourist sport.



## THE UPS AND DOWNS OF SUMMER TRAVEL

form of sabotage rarely fails to be effective. A haggard rider promptly scrambles out over the shafts and the empty chair suddenly becomes steady, as the coolies lope gayly up the mountain side.

One of the features of sedan-chair travel is its charming democracy. The most ardent Bolshevik could not fail to be delighted by the amiable willingness of the bearers, particularly in Fukiên Province, to sit at the same table with their passenger during the intervals of stopping for tea and to elbow him sociably in the scramble for victuals. He would also be pleased by their custom of setting down the traveler without warning, in order to exhibit him to a group of wide-eyed country yokels and explain his personal peculiarities with fetching gestures. Our bearers once deposited us in the middle of a mountain stream, so that they would have their arms free to do justice to their description of us.

Another delightful trait of the chair coolie is his desire to furnish an outdoor cabaret en route. With this end in view, he alternates with his friend in a chant that varies from the responses at High Church to the creak of a sawmill with no oil in the machinery. The bearers do not usually

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

realize that their song is almost as potent in encouraging pedestrianism as the merry lilt of bamboo poles.

The Peking cart which offers diversion of an equally absorbing type, is a two-wheeled vehicle tired in iron studs and as springless as the Sahara Desert. Its top is a cross between a prairie schooner and Sam Hop's laundry wagon at home. It is neatly upholstered inside in wood of some peculiarly durable quality, which seems to become more durable as the ride progresses.

We had our first ride in one at Kalgan, on our way to a dinner party. Following the gesture of the mafoo, we scrambled in and settled down at the back like a bundle of wash on its way to be delivered, wondering if it was polite to hang one's feet out by the driver. We never realized before there was so much of us. After riding a few minutes over the Kalgan streets, we concluded that we had got our geography mixed and that the driver was taking us up the side of the Pyramids.

We hit our carefully marceled hair on the top of the cart on several occasions, and were thankful that the top held us in otherwise the cart probably wouldn't have been there when we came down. By the time we had reassembled ourselves,



## THE UPS AND DOWNS OF SUMMER TRAVEL

we crashed over something with a jar that loosened the filling in our teeth. Once we withdrew and attempted to walk, but a camel train came swinging down the narrow street and as we have a prejudice against the society of camels when wearing a dinner dress, we climbed back again.

The mafoo finally took one foot off our dinner gown and told us that we had arrived at our destination. We saw other taxicabs of similar description about the entrance, disgorging ladies whose hairpins had slid into oblivion and gentlemen who looked like the husband in the third act after a hand-to-hand encounter with somebody who had no business in the house.

Our experience with Chinese vehicles has led us to conclude that if they only spent as much time going forward as they do up and down the average Shanghai motor car would seem by comparison as slow as a man on the way to pay his income tax.

## XXV. ENTER THE SING-SONG GIRL

IF you have ever been invited to a Chinese dinner party, you probably recall that somewhere between the sixth and ninth pork courses, your host called for a few sheets of red paper and drew some foot-prints of antediluvian vertebrates. About ten minutes later the party was interrupted by the entrance of a young lady who sparkled like Tiffany's show case. She smiled apologetically, settled on the edge of a chair about two feet from the table, adjusted her hot water bottle, and went into silent contemplation.

Nobody offered her anything to eat and just as you had about forgotten her existence, she fixed her eyes on the ceiling and broke suddenly into a series of yowls that would outdistance a Cat Show. After being startled into upsetting your sharks' fins, you suddenly realized what had happened. You had just been formally introduced to the Shanghai sing-song girl.

Though foreigners seldom appreciate her contribution to the entertainment, a Chinese party

## ENTER THE SING-SONG GIRL

---

without a sing-song girl would be as incomplete as a pussy without whiskers. All evening long on Shanghai's Rialto the pieces of red paper flow along the street, and the little, powdered, iridescent ladies follow in their wake. Fifteen minutes is usually the limit of her stay at one party. She sits near the table or stands behind a chair, sings one or two alleged musical numbers, then picks up her hot-water bottle and races her embroidered shoes toward the place designated on the next piece of red paper.

There is no class of women in the world quite corresponding to the Chinese sing-song girl. Foreigners should not confuse her with members of an older and less honored profession. Nor is she like the cabaret singer of the West, partly because her talents are usually exercised at private functions, but chiefly because she is supposed to belong in a modest way to the intelligentsia. She is expected to converse brilliantly if called upon to do so, and it is often said that in China the sing-song girls possess a larger fund of political, military, and commercial information than any other class. The conversations they overhear at dinners, while apparently occupied in trying to stare a boiled sea slug out of

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

countenance, are all carefully stored away for their own information and for future entertainment of other patrons.

Perhaps the presence of foreigners takes some of the sing out of the sing-song girl, for those I have seen at dinners have always appeared as stiff as a petticoat frozen on a clothes line. They sit down awkwardly, apparently all elbows, and respond to conversational advances with as much freedom from restraint as a prisoner chatting with the judge over his plea of guilty or not guilty. I remember one Cantonese girl who peeked out from under her bangs like a festive little skye-terrier and coquetted with all the men around the table. She, however, was decidedly an exception, for the rest of them sat rigidly and were severely proper. The sing-song girl's habit of breaking from this attitude into ear-splitting melody without even blowing a whistle as a warning is always disconcerting to foreign guests.

There are just twelve numbers in the sing-song maiden's repertoire. Most of them date back to the time when Marco Polo, with an eye on the reactions of Mrs. Polo, waxed somewhat discreetly enthusiastic about the beautiful entertainers of Hangchow. Only one of the twelve, a historical

## ENTER THE SING-SONG GIRL

---

song, would look well in English without extensive censorship. The sing-song girl is thus spared the cabaret lady's anguish in keeping up with the newest hits, a popular melody being considered new in China if it is under a thousand years old. We know a few foreign orchestras that seem to feel the same way, however.

Though her music is old enough to qualify for a pension, her slang must be this year's model. Every little sing-song girl who takes her career to heart regularly attends a certain theater on Foo-chow Road famous for its up-to-date patter. Here she picks up the latest local idiom and uses it with killing effect in the intervals between the twelve popular screeches. Her clothes, too, must be up to the minute. At present a bicycle cap mania is raging, and four entertainers out of five make their appearance with a visored cap pulled low over their eyes, diamonds sparkling liberally, and a baby hot-water bottle in their hands. A short time ago, there was a mania for the spider bang, an effect achieved by the economical arrangement of about thirty hairs over the forehead. Foreign cosmetics and perfumes are considered especially swanky, sing-song girls being fond of digging out a mirror and applying a lip-

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

stick with all the sang-froid of a New York telephone operator.

Just as every barn-storming theater company in America comes "straight from Broadway," so every little sing-song lady comes straight from Soochow. The tradition that Soochow produces the best-looking women born in China naturally causes every member of the white-light world to claim it as her birthplace. The language of the city being famous for its melodious quality, it has become the chosen dialect of Soochow Road. Soochow has such a reputation as a center for fashion, wit, and beauty that it is sometimes called "the Paris of China," though I hardly believe that a Parisian, observing the turgid canals, the winding alleys, and the one-donkey-power of transportation would be much struck by the resemblance.

He who observes the sing-song girl flitting nightly from party to party with nothing more serious on her mind than the hope of attracting large sheafs of red paper is inclined to wonder where she comes from and what happens to her after her day of popularity is past. Usually she is placed in her profession by parents who hope to see her make a wealthy marriage. With unlim-

## ENTER THE SING-SONG GIRL

---

ited opportunities for meeting well-to-do men, the sing-song girl often does become the Number Two wife of a rich patron and supports her relations in luxury forever after.

If the sands run down in her glass before she succeeds in making such a marriage, she usually has no alternative except to become the *fille de joie* for which most foreigners mistake her. Sometimes the sing-song girl ends her musical career at the Kiangwan Home of the Door of Hope, where some of her number are placed by the police on account of being under the legal fifteen-year age limit and where others go voluntarily because they see no way of escaping an unhappy future.

Contrary to popular opinion and the effect of their diamonds, sing-song girls make but little profit in their professions. The jewels are all the bought or borrowed property of their male employers and the girls are kept so consistently in debt for clothes and support that they have small chance of putting aside even modest savings.

One little girl, who was placed in a sing-song house at the age of twelve to learn the noise repertoire of the profession, became very homesick after a month or two of instruction. She at-

tempted to run away, was recaptured, and chained to a bed, the mistress of the house threatening her with the terrors of the Door of Hope if she didn't become more docile. The youngster evidently had both an inquiring mind and a bent for mechanics, because she picked the lock, sneaked from the house, and asked the first passerby about the reputation of the Door of Hope. Reassured by the answer, she found her way to the home and applied to the matron for admission, presenting the battered lock as a passport.

The sing-song girls who find refuge at the Door of Hope usually marry fairly well, even though they may fail to achieve the *compradore* of their early dreams. Government school-teachers, men in clerical positions and moderately well-to-do merchants often apply to the institution for wives and hardly a week goes by without a wedding.

The genus sing-song girl is subdivided into several species, distributed through different parts of China. Up in Newchwang they have a type capable of drinking 150 cups of samshui in one evening without even disturbing the regularity of her bang. The Shanghai type rarely drinks with her patrons. She is distinguished also by her intellect, which I have never seen displayed, and by her extreme



## ENTER THE SING-SONG GIRL

---

class consciousness. She even goes so far as to issue a little trade journal in the form of a weekly newspaper. She belongs to a guild with a duly elected president and the home of the president is known to Shanghai night life as "The White House."

In one respect at least the powdered little ladies of Soochow Road resemble other powdered ladies in the cabarets at home. In the patois of the electric lighted Chinese life they are known as "wild chickens."

## XXVI. IS LIFE IN CHINA WORTH WHILE?

"CHINA always takes more away from you than it gives."

This pessimistic remark, which we heard stated first by a person smitten with homesickness for the pageant of Fifth Avenue, the glow of the Washington Square lights through a veil of rain, the queer little restaurants that modestly hide away below the level of the sidewalks, and a real soda fountain where one can get "sundaes" with fancy names, is repeated so often that we feel inclined to put a pin through it and bring out the microscope.

Is it true that the average foreigner who lives for a time in China loses more by the experience than he gains?

In the matter of health, he undoubtedly pays a heavy price. I have never yet heard of any one whose physical condition was bettered by life in the Orient, though I know of hundreds who paid a tax on health ranging from loss of energy and a few vagrant ills to chronic invalidism.

## IS LIFE IN CHINA WORTH WHILE?

---

Despite their comparatively easy life, women in China almost invariably fade earlier than those at home. Hair falls out in exasperating handfuls, natural color gives way sooner or later to the kind of blushes that are likely to be deeper on one cheek than on the other, depending on the position of the mirror, eyelids show a tendency to droop heavily, and lines etch themselves at eye and mouth despite the most persistent efforts of the massage amah.

During the space of a year in the Far East, the average woman ages as much physically as she would in five years at home. After she has become acclimated, her facial deterioration is less rapid, but she never regains the youthful freshness that was hers when she first sailed. New-comers in the Orient nearly always remark on the many tired, drawn faces to be seen even among the young girls and the lack of complexions made by corpuscles instead of by chemists.

Concerning health and appearance, therefore, China is a gourmet. It devours without making the slightest return, calling a long death roll every year, sending others home so broken that all the patience of medical science can't quite put the physical Humpty-Dumpty together again, and

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

causing the tea-table friends of many women to remark, "My dear, she says she's only thirty-two, but I'd hate to have been hanging since she was forty-five!"

The grip that health problems have upon the mind of the foreigner in China is proved by the fact that disorders which at home were mentioned only in a consulting room become parlor topics in the Far East.

Neophytes who turn the various colors of the spectrum while symptoms are discussed in a mixed group are among the most interested contributors to the conversation after they have had a little experience of their own. It is astonishing how much of the social discourse in China concerns disease, diets, cautions regarding fruit, and the terrible experience of some friend who wasn't properly inoculated.

Though even the most ardent lover of China would never defend the country from a health standpoint, opinions are divided on the subject of its effect upon business ability. Many claim that a man has far greater opportunities to show his worth—that a young and inexperienced employee can achieve a degree of responsibility beyond his wildest dreams at home.

## IS LIFE IN CHINA WORTH WHILE?

On the other hand, the slower working pace is said to be a serious hindrance after the employee returns and tries to enter into competition with these who have never left the brisker atmosphere. Many who came out to China only for a time return to the Far East very precipitately after a tussle in an office plastered with such mottoes as, "Do it now," "Make it brief," "This is our busy day and so is every other."

China subtracts beauty, physical endurance, and mental energy, but she repents of her harshness by turning fairy godmother and bringing every one not born with a golden spoon in his mouth a little realization of his early dreams. Who, during the novel-reading age of his teens, has not been impressed by the velvet-footed servants, the functionary who deftly moved about in a milieu of linen and silver, bringing in delectable dishes prepared by another personage behind the butler's pantry?

What stenographer, shivering out of bed at six o'clock to darn the hole in her silk stocking just above the shoe line or to "do up" some blouses which she wouldn't dare trust to the rollers in the steam laundry, what stenographer, we repeat, has not thought wistfully of the novel under her

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

pillow in which Amelie brings in the heroine's breakfast and then lays out her dainty clothes for the day?

And what wife of the middle class does not know that the magazine pictures showing a lady in an evening dress washing dishes with mechanical assistance are bitter delusions? And that the heavy-footed Hungarian cook who received her training in a munition factory is a poor substitute for the velvet-pedaled servants of her early dreams?

But in China even the humblest stenotypist can have her breakfast brought upstairs, her garments for the day laid out on the chair, her dress buttoned up the back and her clothes mended for the mere pittance of twelve Mexican dollars a month. To be sure, her servant doesn't say, "*Oui, Madame,*" or wear a cap with frills like the picture of Amelie in the novel, but she is sufficient justification for casual references to "my maid" in letters to her girl friends at home.

The wife who always longed to say "Home, James" to a servant in livery has her wish gratified in China, even though his name isn't James, and he acts as combined horsepower and chauff-

## IS LIFE IN CHINA WORTH WHILE?

feur, and his summer livery from the waist up is too universal to be distinctive.

China's function as a fulfiller of dreams and its power to put middle class people through the motions of luxury is by no means as trivial as it sounds. In the minds of many, this one gift alone outweighs the thefts of youth, good looks and physical well being.

The extent of some of China's other gifts is observable when the former resident goes back to his home town. The most promising boy of his class who married the prettiest girl and settled down to a rosy future in the local bank seems dull and stodgy.

Whenever the returned sojourner in the Orient speaks of the problem of Urga or Manchuria, somebody begins conversation about a neighbor's candidacy for Justice of the Peace. If he speaks of China's famines, somebody is reminded of the increase in the price of rump steak at John Smith's store and the consequent silk dress worn by Mrs. Smith. After a few such remarks, he suddenly realizes that he has outgrown his clan, and that his interests have so expanded that they can never again be fitted into the narrow groove of the friends he left behind him. By living in China,

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

one lives also in England, Russia, Portugal and France, for contact with these many nationalities plays as large a part in the broadening process as contact with the Chinese themselves.

For another thing, he is spared forever that urge of repressed and cheated wanderlust that torments either vaguely or acutely those who remain at home. The man who accepts no matter how excellent a position in his own town or city becomes conscious after a time of a vague discontent, a feeling of having missed something worth while, a resentment toward family or business obligations that keep him chained to his post.

He dreams hopelessly of strange islands under a yellow moon, of the silvered track of the sea, of temples standing by placid lakes, and of the distant, half-heard confusion of a market place in the shadow of a minaret.

He reads steamer schedules under the dining-room lamp while pretending to look at the sporting section, wondering meanwhile why under the sun he married when he might have followed the long road of his dreams.

When he has grown very much older, he sometimes realizes his ambition by joining an organized tour, but he learns then that he is far too late,



## IS LIFE IN CHINA WORTH WHILE?

that worry about cleanly food far outbalances any joy in the artistic beauty of moon gates, that strange beds are distasteful, and that no temple or mountain peak in the world is worth a quiet hour by the fire in his living-room.

There are few sights more pathetic than a group of elderly tourists being patiently conducted to temple, pagoda, and beggar fair, trying to recapture the faded gold of their dream adventures, but consumed with worry on the subjects of possible rheumatism, bronchitis and cholera.

The person who has lived in China never experiences that painful ingrowing wanderlust, nor does his chance to see something of the world occur after he has lost his capacity to enjoy it.

So, after all, does China take away more than it gives?

## XXVII. CHINA'S GOD OF CHANCE

SOME day, if we are invited to a party where they ask conundrums, we are going to say: "What is the difference between the average Chinese and a lamb?" After everybody has guessed wrong, we intend to remark: "A lamb likes to gambol on the green, but a Chinese will gamble on anything." We will then hastily retire, under a heavy barrage of sofa-pillows, cream puffs, and family albums.

The little god with dice cubes for eyes and overlapped playing cards for a guimpe does not reside in Monte Carlo. His real headquarters are in China and he visits the rest of the world only during his sabbatical years. Experience has taught him that the chances taken by gamblers in China make playing at Monte Carlo resemble investment in government bonds.

There is a strange paradox in the Chinese habit of carefully nursing each cash during business hours and then risking the year's profits in a gambling game after the shop is closed.

Ricksha coolies who strain aching muscles all day for the sake of a few coppers throw the entire

## CHINA'S GOD OF CHANCE

---

proceeds into a game of Kang Pao or fan-tan and lose them in an hour. In Western lands, the man who finds recreation in gambling is usually the "easy come, easy go" type who wouldn't recognize Thrift if he saw her walking down the street arm in arm with two Scotchmen. In China, the more canny a man is in business hours, the greater chances he is willing to take with his money after the shop has been boarded up for the night and the last cash taken out of the till.

To the Chinese, there is practically no such thing as a game without coin involved. A stake is as necessary for a good time in China as it used to be for the cremation of a heretic in Europe.

The Chinese used dice before the Greeks did, and their ability to "roll the bones" would be sufficient to break up a camp meeting or to send an ancient Roman home without his toga.

Playing cards consisting of thirty-two pasteboards are another reason why the god of chance takes so few vacations in China. They are known as "cow cards" because of the tradition that they were originally invented by cowherds who found the cattle rather unresponsive company.

To mention all the games of chance common to the Chinese would be like trying to take the germ

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

census of a drop of Whangpoo river water. Children spending a copper or two on sweetmeats usually risk it in a game with the vendor on a chance of tripling the quantity. Crowds gather around fruit sellers' in the South to bet on the number of seeds in an orange. Hundreds of dollars are risked on cricket matches, this particular game being fought with bugs and not bats. Quail fights are also popular, not so much with the quail as with the spectators at the ringside.

Before the modern system of education was introduced, a favorite gambling pastime consisted in betting on the candidates in the literary examinations. When the results were carried across the Empire by fleet messengers and fast boats, people flocked in thousands to hear the news and to settle scores accordingly. Names were posted in the yamens beforehand, and bettors picked out their favorites as they would at a horse race, the contest being to China what the Derby is to England. Incidentally, candidates who flunked the examinations probably found it convenient to emigrate to Thibet.

Even in modern China one may find lotteries based on civil service examinations. Each player selects twenty names from a long list of candidates

## CHINA'S GOD OF CHANCE

---

and the person with the highest proportion of winners on his list receives a prize ranging from \$50 to \$300.

The gambling game best known to foreigners is probably mah-jong. As soon as the sun sets, the shops close, and the evening rice has been disposed of, millions of Chinese citizens sit down at the table for an evening's session with the green, white, and red dragons. They play with a lightning rapidity that makes the game as played by Americans seem a travesty of groping and bungling. The elaborate preliminaries in building the wall show how little the Chinese trust each other when engaged in a game of chance. Not even a Herman the Great could deal himself a loaded hand if he played under the native rules. Though the mah-jong craze is comparatively new in America, the winds, dots, and dragons were popular in the Far East before the fall of the Roman Empire.

Another game well known to foreigners is fan-tan. The players lay stakes on the number of cash left under an upturned bowl after several have been raked out. Fan-tan is a favorite sport wherever the government authorities have an unexplained prejudice against the little god with eyes of dice cubes. The Chinese of San Francisco play

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

it with peanuts. Hence when the police raid an alleged gambling den, they find only a number of bland Chinese munching the Virginia delicacy and apparently wondering why they were interrupted. As peanuts have not been prohibited thus far in America, the brass-buttoned squad can do nothing but help themselves to a few handfuls and thoughtfully withdraw.

Fan-tan was likewise popular among the coolie battalions in France, where many a Shantung farmer earned enough to go up to Paris and buy a lady's hat for himself right on the Rue de la Paix. Coolies who enlisted in rags came home in silks and Paris millinery, leaving sorrowing hearts behind them among the other labor battalions.

The new government of Canton did a startling thing for China when it closed all the public gambling dens in the city, thereby losing a yearly license revenue of \$10,000,000. The voluntary sacrifice of this amount by an administration hard-pressed for funds proves that some Chinese at least realize the country's weakness in this respect and are determined to fight it.

All the palaces of chance that formerly lined the Bund in Canton are closed now, even including

## CHINA'S GOD OF CHANCE

---

the one which advertised itself as a "High-Class Christian Gambling Parlor."

Those knowing the national passion have suggested that many editorial and diplomatic headaches would be prevented if China and Japan would settle their differences by a throw of chance.

Our only suggestion is that a neutral furnish the dice.

## XXVIII. CALLING CUSTOMS IN THE FAR EAST

CALLING in the Far East is an occupation that involves an indefatigable digestion, considerable gymnasium experience, and the ability to smile pleasantly while asking one's companion if it is really necessary to eat a plate of boiled snails.

I am not referring to the calls made in China among foreign ladies. Being accomplished usually by sending out the chauffeur with a deck of cards on the day of a Race Meet or some occasion when nobody will be at home, such calls are as painless as if both parties had submitted to a general anesthetic. In Peking the custom of absentee calls is so prevalent that if one does call in person, he indicates the event by folding his card down the middle.

Some day I am going to speculate a bit on why ladies who will hold up the traffic for fifteen minutes if they happen to pass one another in rickshas, find absolutely nothing to say when they meet on the occasion of a formal call.



## CALLING CUSTOMS IN EAST

---

Maybe it is the artificiality of the affair, possibly it is the lady's chagrin at the delay resulting from finding her hostess at home, or probably it is the chagrin of the other lady at being surprised just as she was demonstrating to the Chinese cook how to make Kentucky cornbread. Whatever the cause, nobody will deny that making formal calls ranks as a social diversion with picking oakum or reading *Cæsar's Commentaries* aloud to an old man who uses an ear trumpet.

The kind of calls I was referring to, however, are those paid to the native Orientals. When I first arrived in the Far East, kind friends took me in hand and led me forth to visit innumerable Chinese, Japanese, and Korean families, all of whom had highly unique notions on the subject of afternoon refreshments.

In Japan, the party begins by the removal of shoes at the door. This occurs always on the day when you are wearing the tan silk hosiery that the amah thoughtfully darned with white cotton. You hope, however, that your hostess will regard this as a mere foreign eccentricity, and you glance covertly at your companions hoping that they will be similarly embarrassed. If you are fortunate

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

enough to notice a hole in another's stocking, you feel very much more at ease.

The next difficulty is to sit down. You never realize that you run into so many editions until you try to dispose of yourself in the Japanese fashion. Then, as soon as you have gotten settled, your hostess upsets everything by bowing her head to the floor and telling you that her house is very miserable.

You try to follow suit by remarking that the house is very beautiful, but usually you lose your balance and come down hard on the trimming of your hat.

After you have folded yourself up again jack-knife fashion, your hostess bows once more and comments further about the miserableness of her residence. By this time you are quite ready to agree with her, but some social instinct causes you to bite the matting and do further damage to the façade of your headgear.

Though the arrival of the colored bean curd temporarily interrupts the calisthenics they are resumed immediately afterwards and continue all the way to the door and at intervals in the shoe-buttoning process. When I first came to Japan I wore high shoes and spats, but it didn't require

## CALLING CUSTOMS IN EAST

---

an efficiency expert to point out the error of my ways.

When I first viewed Korean homes from the outside, I concluded that the most appropriate calling costume would be the uniform of a coal-passer.

But after wandering through a little courtyard promiscuously decorated with the raw material for fried bacon, I was agreeably surprised by being introduced to a room floored in oiled paper and not likely to damage even the white costumes of the owners. I had often marveled at the sight of a Korean in spotless white emerging from a house that looked like the residence of a not very discriminating menagerie. The oiled paper floors are the answer.

A pleasant feature of winter calling in Korea is the fire under the house which antedated steam heat about two thousand years and which to our mind is considerably more effective.

In place of one hissing radiator with jazz tendencies but no musical education is an evenly warmed floor that gives the person sitting on it the sensation of a grilled quail on toast. Furthermore, the favorite Korean refreshment is chicken boiled with noodles and served with pickled tur-

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

nips—a dish which is quite acceptable to foreigners.

The only time I suffered embarrassment while calling in Korea was when my hostess presented me with a little basket of offerings to the gods which had been set on the highroad by members of a household afflicted with smallpox.

In China I have called on all stages of society from Dr. Sun Yat-sen and his charming wife to a farmer's household in Fukien, where the women asked me the price of my clothes, the kind of health enjoyed by my honorable grandmother, and the distance from my country to the moon.

The kindness and generosity shown by Chinese hostesses of even the lower classes is as heart warming to the foreigner as it is sometimes embarrassing.

Once I was so indiscreet as to admire some of the family silkworms, whereupon the lady of the house gave me a whole handful of live ones to carry away as souvenirs. With a strangely fixed smile on my face, I bid a hasty adieu, heroically keeping hold of the crawly handful until a bend in the road permitted me to throw them in the canal.

Another time I was served with something

## CALLING CUSTOMS IN EAST

---

which a missionary lady tactfully assured me were clams. I must admit, however, that I had never before seen clams carrying their eyes mounted on half-inch horns.

There is less artificiality and more real friendliness found by the caller in Chinese homes than by the visitor in Japan; but unless one has a digestive apparatus which has been fitted and tested by the best machine shops, it is not advisable to indulge in the pastime very often.

## XXIX. HABITS OF CHINESE GHOSTS

IF there is a Lucille in the Shadow World who writes fashion notes for spirits, she has probably inscribed something like this:

The favorite haunting costume is the conventional white, draped in classic lines to follow the figure and yet conceal it. These long summer evenings make ideal weather for haunting, and many of the nebulous smart set are taking advantage of it. I have designed a wrap called "Moonbeam Illusion" to wear with the regular gown when the first nip of autumn tends to make the graveyards a bit chilly.

A Chinese note will probably make its appearance in the fall fashions in the shape of the darker gowns such as are worn by the Oriental spirits. A few of our social leaders have adopted the Chinese mode, and it is freely rumored among the crematories that the hoi polloi will follow it before the season is over. I have originated a little gown called the "Banshee's Delight" which combines the solemnity of the Chinese style with the sauciness of a deceased colleen.

Maybe the Lucille of the Spirit World writes that way and maybe she doesn't, but at any rate the whole Psychic Research Society knows that Chinese ghosts do not wear white. They are al-

## HABITS OF CHINESE GHOSTS

---

ways dark, somber ghosts, with a penchant for moving in the shadows and vibrating like the shadow of a tree on a courtyard wall. The fact that they sometimes glide back and forth in a different tempo from their surroundings is all that first attracts the attention of the luckless bystander. There is only one phantom—the White Extraordinary Ghost—that breaks the color scheme, but his position as constable of the underworld gives him a right to his distinctive costume.

Pleasant little pixies with a fondness for dancing on the edge of buttercups have no place in the Chinese lore of the supernatural. Their ghosts are spirits that wander unhappily through the world, knowing that their release from uncomfortable ghostdom lies only in the possibility of securing a substitute from the realm of the living. Therefore the Chinese who feels a bit downhearted may have his temporary cheerlessness aggravated by a ghost with reverse Pollyanna until it reaches the dimensions of a desire for suicide. The man who falls overboard may be pulled to the bottom by a muscular phantom in need of a substitute, and he who partakes of the watermelon that cheers may also consume a cholera poison poured into its depths by a restive spirit.

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

The Oriental's habit of calmly examining the hood of an approaching automobile until a sudden step backward is all that saves him from being converted into hamburg steak is due to his belief that his haunting ghost will be two seconds slower than he is and therefore will be properly annihilated. Unfortunately the Chinese is often a poor judge of speed and goes into the phantom business himself at comparatively short notice.

From the first to the fifteenth of the seventh moon, gifts of spirit money, clothing, furniture, and food are presented to the drifting mass of homeless souls in the hope of buying their good will and causing them to seek their substitutes among the ungenerous.

Buddhist and Taoist priests conduct special services, the Taoists being more popular because of a flexible ritual and lack of restrictions in regard to the musical program. Buddhist services demand special chants, but the Taoist priests beam as pleasantly on "A Hot Time in the Old Town To-night," rendered by a brass band, as on the measured liturgy of ancient worship. The Number One priest adds a touch of vaudeville by a special dance representing the soul's entry into Heaven, with Isadora Duncan trimmings. He



## HABITS OF CHINESE GHOSTS

---

stages a bit of juggling with a device of curved ivory on which the court reporters formerly scribbled remarks made by the Emperor.

No Ghost Festival is complete without a parade headed by a twenty-foot image of the Chief Ghost, with pop-eyes made of eggshells, and featured by images of beggars, opium-smokers, famine victims, suicides, and plague sufferers. Within recent years the figure of an automobile victim has taken its place among the homeless spirits.

He who fails to march in the parade or to contribute his share toward the phantom feast is likely to see men and women with distorted faces slinking among the shadows, to hear shrieking voices in empty rooms and to awake some night at a cold, clammy touch, to see a piece of the family cutlery reposing somewhere on his body. Chinese ghosts have no sense of humor. They take haunting as a serious occupation and those to whom they appear have good reason to burn silver paper and start a bank account for them in the fourth dimension.

Incidentally, Chinese believe that the International Settlement of Shanghai is comparatively free from ghosts, as no spirit could find its way around the temperamentally numbered streets

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

without considerable experience. It is also believed that the Settlement phantoms who have learned the city are extremely snobbish and admit no humbler brothers to membership. We don't know where a ghost could find living quarters in Shanghai anyway.

.

### XXX. THIS POOR LITTLE BOY HAD A HAPPY CHRISTMAS AFTER ALL<sup>1</sup>

ONCE in the city of Shanghai there lived a poor boy. He was also a quiet boy, which was most unusual for Shanghai, but then it was probably because he was poor. This boy was so very poor that he used to take his friends out to parties in rickshas, so of course it soon happened that he didn't have any little girls to play with. He was not a cripple except above the ears, but nevertheless he was very, very sad.

Late in the afternoons he would frequently go down to the Astor House and lean against the telephone booth as if waiting for a number. There he would watch other little boys who were not poor drinking cherries with little girls and playing games with their eyes. Sometimes a little girl would try to stab a cherry or olive with her

<sup>1</sup> This sketch was written as a parody of the typical Christmas story turned in by many of the 700 American children who participated in a Christmas Story Contest conducted by the China Press.

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

toothpick and the boy would try too and they would all laugh.

"Such fun," sighed the poor boy as he bought three Capstans. "How I wish I could be with them."

Christmas Day dawned bright and clear. The poor boy looked in his stocking, but didn't find anything in it except a hole left there by the amah. He then dressed up, put a piece of imitation mistletoe in his buttonhole, and stood out on the Bund, hoping that some rich lady who was fond of little boys would come along and take him home for Christmas dinner. Several ladies passed in rich limousines, but as their attention was taken up by little boys whom they had already adopted, nobody gave him a tumble.

Pretty soon, when it was past dusk and the poor boy had just decided to have Christmas dinner in the Y.M.C.A. restaurant, another boy came along. The other boy's name was Frank. The poor boy thought that he was poor too because they worked in the same office, but he noted that Frank was dressed up like a plush horse.

"Would you like to go to a party at the Carlton?" asked Frank.

## THE POOR BOY'S CHRISTMAS

---

"Oh, goody, goody," said our hero, throwing away his third Capstan and jumping up and down. "But then it wouldn't be worth while," he added ruefully, stopping in midair. "I am a very poor boy and none of the little girls will play with me."

"Oh, that is all right," said Frank in an earnest voice, "I have a couple of janes dated up."

That is how the poor boy, whose name was John, went to the Carlton. When he entered he saw lots of bright lights and some prettily painted walls and ladies. "Oh, what a nice place," said John, "and to think that I used to spend my evenings reading Wells' *Outline of History*."

After meeting two little girls with short dresses and bobbed hair, they all went to find a table. Just then some music began in the other end of the room. "Is it meant to sound like that?" asked the poor boy, "Or is it just because they can't help themselves?"

But without waiting for an answer, John rose to his feet. "Where are you going?" asked Frank.

"I am a Boy Scout and pledged to do one good deed a day," said the poor boy. "I am going to tell those ladies that they are losing their dresses."

"If you do, you will be mobbed," said Frank, putting out a hand as if to detain him.

"How strange!" muttered the poor boy. But then, as he looked around, he noted that the ladies were not losing their dresses, but that they were held up by strings of beads.

He danced with one of the little girls, for he had once gone to dancing school, but he didn't enjoy it much because the little girl was so very tired. She was so tired that she kept her head on his shoulder all through the dance.

When he danced with the other little girl, he found it wasn't very much better, because she wanted to go many different ways at once and John had a lot of trouble trying to follow her.

"Is this the St. Vitus Dance?" the poor boy asked politely.

"Where did you come from—Chungking?" asked the little girl. "This is a shimmy."

"Oh," said the poor boy, who was very observant and studious, "I must write that down in my notebook."

So the evening went merrily on. John, Frank and the two little girls partook of a bounteous repast and wended their way among the dancers, capering gayly. Once the poor boy heard a crash and started for the door.

## THE POOR BOY'S CHRISTMAS

---

"What is the matter?" asked Frank. "That was only a broken glass."

"Oh," said John, flushing slightly, "I thought it was a string of beads."

But as the evening wore on, the poor boy became greatly troubled. He hadn't any money except some ricksha fare and he had heard one of the little girls say that she lived out beyond Siccawei.

"I hope you are very rich," he said to the other boy, "because I am poor, and we have been spending money as if we were taipans and belonged to the Shanghai Club."

"Oh, that is all right," said the other boy. "Just watch me." At this time a Chinese boy approached and taking a piece of paper out of his hand, Frank wrote down a name in pencil.

"Whose name is that?" asked John.

"I don't know," said Frank, "I saw it the other day on a tombstone in Bubbling Well."

"But suppose they find out who you are," said the poor boy.

"Oh, that is all right," he answered. "Haven't you noticed that our office has a back exit? And now we are going for a ride around the Rubicon."

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

"Oh, oh," said John, clapping his hands again.  
"What a very merry Christmas!"

That is the last time that John could be called a poor boy. The very next day he bought six sharp lead-pencils for himself and thus became as rich as anybody else in Shanghai.



## XXXI. SANTA CLAUS IN THE ORIENT

CHRISTMAS takes a longer time to incubate in China than any place we know, with the possible exception of those magazine offices which make up the holiday number with paperweights on the desk to keep the electric fans from blowing the copy away. It begins long before Thanksgiving, before even the time when people sorrowfully take their fur coats out of mothballs and realize that the only really effective way to use them in killing moths is to hit the moths with the balls. Christmas goes through the stages of infection, rising temperature, and crisis, which is reached with the sailing of the last boat to reach home before December twenty-fifth. The epidemic then abates temporarily, only to rise to fever pitch again when transpacific presents arrive and the time for local shopping grows short.

China, we might remark, gets Christmas going and coming. It gets it going when the last filet lace hand-bag swings out from the dock and blows its whistle as it points toward America: it gets it

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

coming when the first kaleidoscope necktie from home turns off the steam and fastens up to the jetty. The month that elapses between these events is quite necessary for recuperation.

After untying parcels at the Customs Office until he felt completely unstrung, an exasperated friend of ours remarked that next year he would buy the family a number of goldfish and let them swim home. We would like to make the same suggestion, because receiving a gift in China is even more complicated and painful than sending one. The verse, "It is more blessed to give than to receive," can be applied to Shanghai like mucilage to the back of a postage stamp, though neither process can be regarded as especially blessed.

If you are an American, you get a nice, stiff little pasteboard, hoping that you are well and informing you that there is a package at the post office. You hop in the nearest ricksha, as light-hearted as a firefly about to marry a glowworm, and let each flop of the coolie's straw sandals bring you nearer to the rope of pearls which you award yourself from the family.

When you present the card at the office, however, a Chinese with a face as impassive as a

## SANTA CLAUS IN THE ORIENT

---

crack mah-jong player with all winds and dragons in his hand remarks that you haven't any chop from the Chinese post office. You acknowledge the charge; in fact, you even go so far as to say that you haven't any steak from there, either. You are so ignorant that you didn't even know they run an abattoir as a sideline. The clerk gives you a look resembling the voice of a man in a fashionable tourist bureau when you ask for second-class tickets, and succinctly informs you that you must go to the Chinese post office and give them five dollars.

Not having time to look up the criminal code in order to discover what section you violated by receiving a gift from home, you flag another ricksha and start down town again. At the Chinese post office, you join a mass of natives in close formation and wonder as you struggle why so many coolies are getting Christmas presents. When you finally reach the desk, somebody takes the five dollars from you without even administering a local anesthetic.

You hint in a hushed voice about a package, only to be informed that it is back at the American post office where you came from. A ricksha coolie paddles the mud again, a package is handed

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

to you across the counter, and just as you are turning away with a relieved sigh, the clerk tells you that you'll have to go back to the Chinese post office in order to have the package opened.

Although you feel perfectly capable of cutting the cord yourself, you are so used to taking orders by this time that you hunt up an unballasted ricksha and start off on another local sightseeing tour. You present your package, hoping that they will let you have the string and paper back after they have commandeered the contents, and then stand by while an interested audience of coolies find out how much your friends think of you. If the duty is considered less than five dollars, you get back some small change; if your friends wanted to impress you by marking the value considerably higher than it is, you lose the five and a few other metal tokens besides. Then you have nothing left to do but roll up the package again, buy a bottle of nerve tonic, and pray that another boat won't come in for at least a week.

Christmas gifts from home are sometimes as welcome as a box of stove polish to an African society leader in need of some new face cream. But why do friends send silk neckties to a country where they have whole herds of silk worms on the hoof? Why do they send lace boudoir caps to a

## SANTA CLAUS IN THE ORIENT

---

land where handmade lace is as common as sneezes at a Hayfever Convention? And why—oh triple-distilled why—do they send fruit cakes, fudge, roast goose and other things to eat? After a month's voyage on the rollicking deep, a box of edibles is usually something to be opened at arm's length and to be pondered over by a chemist. The person who wants to say "Thank you" appropriately must either take the mixture to a laboratory or else write a very non-committal note saying, "I received your present and enjoyed them very much. Did the cook make it or did you raise them yourself?"

Equally interesting are some of the Christmas cumshas presented by the Chinese. We know a missionary doctor to whom a grateful patient last year presented two bottles of Scotch whisky, the gift arriving just as the good medical man was entertaining his guests with a tirade against the Demon Rum. Another friend of ours reports the presentation of several steam-roller-caressed ducks, the kind which consist of only two dimensions and which swing cheerfully in the breeze in front of Chinese shops.

It is really wonderful how Christmas has reacted on the Chinese mind. Every mercantile establishment from Wing On's huge department

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

store to the most congested curio shop advertise holiday sales; beggars with borrowed infants crowd the highways; ricksha men try to charge double fare, and superannuated coolies in smocked petticoats peddle holly on Szechuen Road. Every lacquer-ware man or linen purveyor who comes to the house announces that he belong "Chlistian" and is therefore willing to lose money on the sale. Even the servants, enlightened by coworkers as to the foreign habit of giving presents, speak touchingly of a sudden theological change.

After all, Christmas in the Far East isn't so radically different from the holiday at home. There are the same mica snowstorms in the drug-store windows, the same puffy coat hangers, fattened by a diet of cotton wadding and brocaded silk, and the same array of useless trifles which every woman will put aside to give away for bridge prizes.

Pheasant may take the place of roast turkey and stewed haws of cranberry sauce, but at least there are a few Christmas trees left in China and a few children who haven't been told that Santa Claus was cut out of the same piece of cloth as Little Red Riding Hood and the Japanese treaty with Korea.

## XXXII. A VIGNETTE OF SOOCHOW

PREVIOUS to exploring the city, our idea of Soochow was principally that of a place for native tourists to drop off the train and buy more watermelon seeds. We had heard indefinite rumors to the effect that the chief insect pests there were donkeys, the donkeys being so small that any one over one hundred pounds gave them curvature of the spine. We understood also that it was a favorite place for Shanghai Chinese to park Number Two wives who might otherwise turn the matrimonial duet into a trio and ruin the harmony.

When we visited Soochow, however, we saw the watermelon seeds and a few of the donkeys, but somehow we missed the Number Two wives. From many sources we had heard that Soochow ladies are the most beautiful in China. After viewing some of the beauty-prize contestants in the streets, however, we have decided that just as all the best California oranges are in New York, so all the most charming Soochow flappers are in Shanghai. The girls we saw peeking coyly from doorways had visages of the type that look best

at a masked ball, the features of most of them being as irregular as a French verb.

Our second disillusionment occurred when we cantered down the horse-road in a carriage trimmed for the holiday with flowing red streamers and shiny Christmas tree ornaments. We had not expected to travel in a carriage, our idea of sight-seeing in Soochow being concerned with the sedan-chairs and the donkeys. After passing through a gate in the wall to the city itself, we were greeted by a deputation of ricksha coolies and the information that as the steps on the canal bridges had been smoothed down a few months ago, wheeled traffic could now negotiate the city streets.

Though we missed our tour on the back of Soochow's famous insects, we found out more things about the possibilities of ricksha travel than we dreamed of even on those Shanghai thoroughfares that have as many different degrees of depression as a Suicide Club. A street in Soochow is just wide enough for three eels to march abreast. In addition, it has more ups-and-downs than the first year of married life. It may be true that the City Fathers smoothed off the bridges, but they somehow overlooked several



## A VIGNETTE OF SOOCHOW

---

thousand little stone steps and others not so little that sit innocently in the middle of the thoroughfares, just waiting for a ricksha to come along. After losing two fillings from our teeth, we decided that the City Fathers and ricksha men were both subsidized by the local dentists' guild.

Besides, every canal bridge is at the crest of a hummock down which the brakeless but not unbreakable ricksha speeds at a rate of three mangled pedestrians a minute. When two rickshas meet on the highway, foot travelers take refuge in the nearest doorway while the leg-power chauffeurs decide the right of precedence by a system of genealogy. The man who works back to the seventh generation first gets the right of way. We didn't do much sightseeing in rickshas, our time being given principally to clutching the handle of our umbrella and wondering how they would dispose of the remains, if any.

Soochow is a proud old city, conservative to a degree and ever mindful of the fact that for five hundred years it was one of the Chinese capitals. In Wusih, the residents take pride in showing visitors the city's factories; in Soochow, they show him the pagodas. The only evidence we noticed of modern commercialism was a Rice and Bean

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

Cake Exchange, which, considering the reputation of the average Chinese stock exchange, is hardly a wreath of daisies on the brow of the city.

Every time a rich man of the ancient régime had a few spare decades on his hands, he built a pagoda. Judging from the number scattered over the countryside, building pagodas must eventually get to be a habit, like having one's hair cut or going to the movies or getting dresses trimmed with monkey fur. Looking over the city from a height gives the impression that there are as many pagodas in Soochow as there are houses built in the architectural style of the Mid-Garbage Period.

The most important pagoda in the city is the Peh Sze Tah. We climbed to the top up flights of typically Chinese stairs, stopping along the way to admire mural decorations composed of Buddhas in contemplation and signatures of American sailors. From the highest gallery we saw the city through a thin veil of sleet, its widest avenue looking as narrow as a yard of baby ribbon. On a far-off summit stood the Tiger Hill Pagoda with a slant to its length likely to make the spectator wonder whether the fault is in the horizon or in himself. It is not often, even in

## A VIGNETTE OF SOOCHOW

---

China, that one sees a hill with its pagoda on crooked. Farther away was a pagoda around which Chinese witches hold a party every year. On this occasion the black art ladies of Soochow roll down over the rocks and briars of a hillside without even dislocating the flowers in their hair. Their annual exercises are witnessed by large crowds who seem to be in some doubt as to whether the ladies are trying to reduce their weight or have just joined the Holy Rollers.

Close to the site of the old Examination Halls are the two Ink Pagodas, erected long ago by a public-spirited citizen who hoped to give the youth of the city better joss in their intellectual tests. After the building of the two shafts, however, the students flunked even more consistently than before. The donor of the pagodas couldn't understand the failure of his investment until a priest pointed out how futile it was to supply ink without a brush. The Soochow civic beautifier dug into his Liberty Bonds a third time and built a Brush Pagoda, after which the Soochow literati passed the tests like an Overland Limited going by Tanktown Corners.

In a bird's-eye view of Soochow one is impressed by the number of small hills in the heart

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

of the city. Though lacking in fire laws, Soochow has its own way of punishing carelessness. If several houses go up in flames the site of the building where the blaze started becomes the dumping ground for all the burned-out neighbors. After trying in vain to clear his land of an ever-growing accumulation of ashes and unsavory food fragments, the unfortunate property-owner usually abandons his ground and lets a hill grow where his house used to be.

Soochow is one of the few cities near the Chinese coast where Buddhism is an active force. Here, for the first time since we came to the East, we saw a new temple in process of erection. Here also we saw a Buddha with a clean face and a shelf of life-sized genii who had been freshly gilded. The Sih Yuen Temple was as well-swept as if a typhoon had just blown through it and the electric bulbs that hung in the great lamps proved that the brothers of the adjoining monastery are bringing the establishment up to date.

Devout Buddhists of the city gain merit for the next world by buying snakes and setting them at liberty. When we suggested that this snake-liberating habit is a bit hard on the neighbors, we were told that the reptile-merchant furnishes a

## A VIGNETTE OF SOOCHOW

---

place for the call to freedom and then recaptures the snakes for the use of other merit-seekers later on. We heard that since the passing of the prohibition amendment, there are rattlesnakes in America dated up for six weeks ahead, but we didn't know that a similar situation obtained in Soochow.

We saw many other sights during our holiday, including the City Temple, the Liu Gardens, and the Bridge of Fifty-Three Arches, but the things we are likely to remember longest are the twisted streets, deliberately built that way because evil spirits travel only in a straight line, the tangle of soupy canals, the gray, curling roofs seen from the top of the pagoda, and the rickshaman's playful habit of dragging his vehicle over half a dozen assorted stone steps.

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

of the city. Though lacking in fire laws, Soochow has its own way of punishing carelessness. If several houses go up in flames the site of the building where the blaze started becomes the dumping ground for all the burned-out neighbors. After trying in vain to clear his land of an ever-growing accumulation of ashes and unsavory food fragments, the unfortunate property-owner usually abandons his ground and lets a hill grow where his house used to be.

Soochow is one of the few cities near the Chinese coast where Buddhism is an active force. Here, for the first time since we came to the East we saw a new temple in process of erection. Here also we saw a Buddha with a clean face and a shelf of life-sized genii who had been freshly gilded. The Sih Yuen Temple was as well-swept as if a typhoon had just blown through it and the electric bulbs that hung in the great lamps proved that the brothers of the adjoining monastery are bringing the establishment up to date.

Devout Buddhists of the city gain merit for the next world by buying snakes and setting them at liberty. When we suggested that this snake-liberating habit is a bit hard on the neighbors, we were told that the reptile-merchant furnishes a

## A VIGNETTE OF SOOCHOW

---

place for the call to freedom and then recaptures the snakes for the use of other merit-seekers later on. We heard that since the passing of the prohibition amendment, there are rattlesnakes in America dated up for six weeks ahead, but we didn't know that a similar situation obtained in Soochow.

We saw many other sights during our holiday, including the City Temple, the Liu Gardens, and the Bridge of Fifty-Three Arches, but the things we are likely to remember longest are the twisted streets, deliberately built that way because evil spirits travel only in a straight line, the tangle of soupy canals, the gray, curling roofs seen from the top of the pagoda, and the rickshaman's playful habit of dragging his vehicle over half a dozen assorted stone steps.

### XXXIII. THE OPIUM GAME

THROUGHOUT the history of the world, the human species has idealized the faculty of forgetting. Ancient man dwelt affectionately on the fable of the waters of Lethe; modern man has been happy in the discovery of aphasia, a very convenient disease which gives a husband an excuse for a long excursion away from home and an equally good excuse for not answering his wife's questions about it when he returns. Before the discovery of the bright and shining alibi of aphasia, men dissatisfied with reality tried smoking or eating forgetfulness from the juice of a flower. Among the results of their attempt are the works of De Quincey, the long files of hollow-chested prisoners in Western police courts, and the wrinkles on the collective brow of the Chinese Maritime Customs.

Everything in China, from the Bridge of Ten Thousand Ages to the strictly fresh eggs for sale in Chinese shops is so very ancient that I was greatly surprised to learn the comparative youth of the opium habit. Somehow, I was certain that



## THE OPIUM GAME

---

the first man who ever saw a dragon noticed it coyly beaming at him through a haze of bluish smoke, and I felt equally sure that the Taoists built up their highly imaginative theology with the assistance of the "black rice."

I was all wrong, however, which, though not unusual, is still disconcerting. Poppies were cultivated as far back as the Sung dynasty, but the reason for including them in the imperial landscape gardening had nothing to do with dreams. They were grown because the ladies of the court liked to arrange the flowers in vases or paint them on silk, or put them in their hair and let them hang over their ears. Somewhat later, opium was used in capsule form for medicinal purposes, and 200 catties of it were presented yearly to the Emperor as tribute.

Cultivation of the poppy for the sake of its juice began only about a hundred years ago. The pipe in use to-day is a modern invention, first produced in Canton, as the variety of pipe employed when smoking was introduced into Formosa during the early eighteenth century was a simple affair of bamboo. Incidentally opium-smoking began through the habit of adding just a pinch of it to a pipeful of tobacco for the sake of an additional

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

kick. Gradually the amount of opium was increased until the milder weed found itself crowded out altogether.

The first edict against opium-smoking, issued in 1729, was aimed especially at the bright lights in the smart set of Formosa. The opium trade was unimportant until the opening years of the nineteenth century, when India began to dump it in such quantities that some years later the number of opium smokers in China was estimated at 40,000,000.

Speaking of edicts reminds me that one of the Ming brethren issued an edict against tobacco smoking, thereby preceding the American W.C.T.U. by nearly four hundred years. Though somewhat removed from the subject, I am reminded also of a prohibitionist Emperor of Korea, who reigned two thousand years ago and who stationed guards at the gates of Seoul to note the breath of passersby and arrest anybody with an alcoholic aura.

From being a leading article of commerce worth £6,000,000 a year to the Indian government, opium became in one short century an article of contraband to be searched for in the holds of ships and pried out from a hundred amazing places of

## THE OPIUM GAME

---

concealment. In that short space of time the Western international conscience underwent a change which to the Chinese is completely incomprehensible. China, having settled all moral questions to her satisfaction a couple of geologic epochs ago, cannot understand how it happened that the opium-trading nations moved up to the hallelujah corner and got religion. Therefore foreigners whose racial ancestors helped introduce the vice to China are now engaged in the opposite occupation of trying to catch the wily native who has learned to take the dream-stuff seriously.

And there are more methods of introducing opium into China than there are ways of phrasing a proposal. Any phrenologist will tell you that the bump of resourcefulness on a Chinese head begins just above the back of the collar and continues around to the eyebrows. As a result police and Customs officials are treated to a daily change of program, with an afternoon performance on Sundays. A Customs official might meet his demise in many different ways, but at least he is certain of not being bored to death. Smugglers and opium den keepers are gifted with such refreshing originality that they could make their

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

fortune in any one of the refined arts, if their interests only ran that way.

Consider the scenario of a little drama which occurred in May, 1921, the chief actors of which were a Sikh Constable, a coolie, and a peanut. When the scene opened, the Constable was patrolling one of the jetties, swinging his club and meditating on the eternal truths of the Vedas. Suddenly the horizon was populated by a coolie, who came up from one of the boats, riding a couple of baskets of peanuts on the end of a bamboo pole and juggling Chinese musical notes at the same time. It being a well-known zoölogical fact that no policeman from Kamchatka to Terre del Fuego ever let a group of peanuts or a moving banana stall go by him without reaching out his hand, the Sikh acted up to form and took a handful. The first peanut he opened was disappointing as a collation, but interesting from the standpoint of a chemist or the Mixed Court. The Sikh immediately laid a barrage and began some heavy shelling, the result of which showed that every nut was a little repository of opium. I believe that the coolie's mail address is still the Ward Road jail.

Then there was the case of the boarding-house

## THE OPIUM GAME

---

guest who arrived for dinner just as the boy had whisked away the last quivering fragment of cornstarch pudding and who tried to console himself by sending out for a can of kippered herring. When the can was opened, the herring didn't exactly begin to sing, like the pie in the nursery rhyme, but at least it behaved strangely unlike fish. A little olfactory investigation proved that the man was the unwitting owner of some first-grade opium. In this case I believe that no arrests were made, though the police kept local shopkeepers busy with the can opener for some days afterward.

A spectacular haul was achieved in December, 1920, when a policeman of suspicious tendencies arrested a coolie with several planks on the mezzanine floor of his wheelbarrow. This coolie disproved the old adage about the early bird, because it happened that he excited the policeman's curiosity by starting to work two hours before the usual zero hour. When his unexplained cargo was investigated at the police station, it turned out that each plank was hollow and that crowded in its interior were many fat packets of the "black rice."

The largest haul on record in Shanghai was

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

made some months ago when a motor truck was searched and over \$100,000 worth of opium discovered. Though not all those implicated were arrested, the loss of this amount must have meant much wailing and gnashing of teeth among the brethren who invested their capital in the dream-bringing pellets.

There have been instances of opium concealed in zinc blocks. There are also many records of its storage inside of bamboo poles, and the police have frequently found it in the partition between rooms. But to my mind the high-water mark of originality was reached when an ingenious smuggler made an attempt to conceal his contraband in the baggage of Sir Robert Hart, former Inspector-General of Customs. A similar case occurred in January, 1919, when \$16,000 worth of the drug was discovered hidden with the luggage of Sir Francis Aglen, the present Inspector-General, during a trip to Shanghai from Hongkong.

Missionaries, foreign officials, and others of unquestioned standing have often been embarrassed by the discovery of opium in their luggage, placed there by an alert servant interested in making a little money on the side.

Licensed opium dens were closed gradually by

## THE OPIUM GAME

---

the drawing of lots, just as the brothels are being eliminated to-day. Even in the height of their public popularity, however, the dens were never the richly hung, gold embroidered, softly illuminated, and incense-bathed establishments that novels and melodramas would lead us to believe. They were always sordid little shops, characteristically dirty, and since the abolition of licenses, the clandestine dens still in existence have become even grimmer and shabbier than before.

Though the play, "The Man Who Came Back," shows foreigners in a Shanghai opium den and assumes that such dates are a regular part of the local social life, a Shanghai police-inspector of long service told me that he had seen only one foreigner in an opium resort during all his experience in China.

A large part of the opium in China to-day is said to have been imported from Persia through Siberia. High prices and official vigilance have eliminated forever the days when opium-smoking was "play pidgin" to a great proportion of the Chinese population. Only those indulge now to whom the little black ball is a matter of life and death, and the curling bluish smoke the only comfort left in their shattered existence.

## XXXIV. CONFUCIUS, CHINA'S GREAT SAGE

ON October eighteenth, in every Confucian temple from Peking to the farthest edge of Szechuen, incense is burned and offerings placed before the tablet of the Sage in order to commemorate his birthday. Lacking the mystic elements and the beauty of liturgy to be found in the other religions of China, Confucianism expresses itself in bare temples and simple services. Most of the temples hold their rites only once a year, the leader of the ceremonies being not an ordained priest but the layman who happens to be president of the Confucian Society.

If Confucius could enter a temple and crowd in among his own worshipers, he would be sufficiently astonished to lose his philosophic calm.

He died a disappointed man, with the conviction that his life had been a failure. "My doctrines make no way," he exclaimed before his death, "I will get upon a raft and float about on the sea."

"Alas! There is no one who knows me," he remarked on another occasion, and he once bitterly



## CONFUCIUS, CHINA'S GREAT SAGE

---

told his disciples that in order to become truly famous, he should have taken up archery or charioteering.

The autobiography of Confucius is as brief as the celebrated railroad report of Mr. Finnegan. He says:

"At fifteen, my mind was bent on learning.

"At thirty I stood firm.

"At forty I had no doubts.

"At fifty I knew the will of Heaven.

"At sixty I could trust my ears.

"At seventy I could follow my heart's desires without transgression."

There are several details left out of the report, including his unhappy marriage with a lady of the House of Sung, his long wanderings from court to court in the hope of finding a patron who would allow him to try out his theories of government, and the deep irony of his final position as an advisor on military tactics when he of all men prided himself on the arts of peace.

Born in 551 B. C., Confucius, at the age of twenty-two, was already a philosopher with a following of disciples. Perhaps it was the lady of the House of Sung who drove him to philosophy, for early in his career he remarks: "Of all people,

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

women and servants are the most difficult to manage. If you are familiar with them, they come forward, and if you keep at a distance, they become discontented."

Perhaps somewhere on the Milky Way the souls of Socrates and Confucius will meet, and a great crowd of spirits will gather to hear the discussion. We won't be among them, however. You will find us over in a secluded side of the arch, where Xantippe and the lady of the House of Sung are comparing notes on philosophers as viewed daily from the other side of the breakfast table.

"My dear," Xantippe will remark, laying an emphatic finger on the knee of the more demure Lady Sung, "you can't tell me a word about it. Didn't I put up with the same thing for nearly forty years?" We expect to learn considerably more philosophy from this discussion than from the other one.

After having collected nearly three thousand disciples, Confucius turned to the art of government. Tradition states that the sage and a guard of disciples once passed a tomb where a woman was wailing like the newest inmate of the City Pound. On being asked the cause of her grief,

## CONFUCIUS, CHINA'S GREAT SAGE

she explained that her father-in-law had been eaten by a tiger in the neighborhood, then her husband, and later her son.

"But why did you continue to live here?" the sage asked.

"Because there is no oppressive government," she explained. Whether or not the loss of all one's relatives pays for exemption from a heavy income tax is a question that can't be answered by one who doesn't know the family. But in any case, her response led Confucius to remark that a bad government was more to be feared than a malicious tiger and he resolved to hold public office himself.

During his three years as city magistrate of Chungtoo, he regulated the diet of young and old to be sure that they had appropriate food, set such a good example of honesty that there was only one price in the market-places, and made his people so happy that they invariably sang at their work.

Breaking with his prince because the latter accepted a gift of eighty dancing girls and refused for three days to confer with the sage, Confucius left the city and went to reside in the neighboring state of Wei.

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

"I've not seen one person who loves Virtue as he does Beauty," said the disgruntled philosopher, in commenting on the Prince's enjoyment of the Ziegfeld Follies of his day.

For the rest of his life, outside of a brief tenure of office as Minister of Crime, Confucius wandered from court to court, seeking always to become official advisor to the ruler, but suffering rebuffs and making compromises with his principles that finally caused him to call himself a failure. An eye witness of his entry into one city described him as having "the forsaken appearance of a stray dog." In another town he was besieged in a house for five days because of his striking resemblance to a notorious brigand. Legend says that he charmed away the mob by playing the lyre and singing original songs.

He enjoyed a small share of glory in the court of the ruler of Wei, but one day when the duke went riding in a carriage with a beautiful courtesan, he ordered the sage to follow him. The sight of the philosopher trailing behind the lady of light reputation so amused the crowd in the streets that Confucius left the city in a huff, more convinced than before that in contests between

## CONFUCIUS, CHINA'S GREAT SAGE

Virtue and Beauty, Virtue comes out a bad second best.

Confucius, one gathers from the historians, was not entirely popular with his contemporaries. His conscious self-righteousness; his overstressed humility; and his habit of giving sonorous advice must have made him a bit difficult to entertain as a steady boarder. In one instance he was seized by a band of citizens as he was approaching a city, and compelled to promise that he would omit the intended call.

Forced by poverty to accept gifts from unscrupulous princes and to give advice on despised military topics, Confucius went down to his death feeling that he had accomplished nothing. He still claimed that if he could rule the realm for three years, he would make it an earthly paradise of good government, but outside of his experience as magistrate of Chung-too, the great chance never came.

"The high mountain must crumble, the strong beam break, and the wise man wither away like a plant," Confucius remarked sadly in his seventieth year. Three years later he died, and was buried simply in Shantung, where his grave is a goal of pilgrimage to this day.

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

Several centuries after the death of the man who became embittered by the fact that he was not sufficiently famous, imperial families were burning incense before his tablet, his sayings became the foundation of education, and Buddhists and Mohammedans were slaughtered as heretics because they failed to do him reverence.

Confucius offers no emotional impetus to follow his teachings; nor does he promise any future rewards or punishments. He merely lays down the code of a gentleman and leaves theology to Lao-tze and the mystics.

## PART II





## CHAPTER I

*In Which the Baby Decides that "Home, Sweet Home" Must Have Been Written by an Orphan. . . . The Charms of Calling on Sinza Road. . . . Amah Stages a Funeral. . . . The Strange Vagaries of Silk Hose in Shanghai.*

MARCH twenty-ninth.—The family has been raving about somebody called Opal Whitely and somebody else called Daisy Ashford that they said were infant prodigies. I guess I'm as smart as they are, even if a lot younger, so am going to keep a diary myself.

The family can't read it, of course. They're awfully stupid. Heard mamma say just now that the amah had better take me out, as I'm making marks all over a piece of paper on the dining room floor. Will continue diary in kitchen. That's where I spend most of my time anyway.

I live in a nice brick house with my family, but though I have been introduced to the others, I am not well-acquainted with anybody except the amah. She speaks a nice, easy language and not

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

the funny kind of foreign talk the others use. Am learning to understand them, though. This morning I heard them wondering where all last night's chicken went. But when I started to tell them about the cook's two cousins who are boarding in the kitchen, mamma said, "Listen to the little dear. He's trying to say 'Daddy.' "

Have decided that the family is quite hopeless. Will learn to read the Want Ads as soon as possible so as to find a new home.

---

March thirtieth.—There are lots of things about grown-up talk that I don't understand yet. To-day papa told my auntie that if she didn't make good pretty soon, he would send her back to America. Auntie cried and said that if papa would be decent to poor Bertie, she would soon have a man to care for her.

"Bertie!" said papa. "He isn't a man; he's a lap dog."

"He comes from a very good family!" Auntie said, crying some more.

"He must have come a long way," papa said.

"And he knows some of the best people in town," auntie replied.

## THE DIARY OF A SHANGHAI BABY

---

"Perhaps. I always said myself that the night watchman was a pretty good fellow," papa remarked.

It's too deep for me. Am going to take a nap.

---

March thirty-first.—Went out to-day with the amah. Mamma thought we went to the Public Gardens, but we didn't. Amah took me calling on Sinza Road where all her family live in a nifty two-roomed house. They were very much interested in my new back tooth. First amah put her finger in my mouth. Then her brother, Lo Shing, First Rate Lady Best Style Tailor, put his finger in my mouth. Then her cousin, Ah See, who runs High Class Christian Gambling Parlor, put his finger in my mouth. Then Liou Zung, Stylish Maker of Ancient Chinese Ornament, put his finger in my mouth. Wish amah's family wasn't so fond of garlic.

---

April second.—Went out with amah again this morning and a fresh Jap baby made a face at me in Hongkew Park. Will get even some day. When I was enjoying bottle at home later, mamma said, "He's getting to be such a big baby

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

that pretty soon we can give him solid food." If she only knew what I had this morning! A piece of meat dumpling that amah chewed for me and a water chestnut. Amah is a good sport.

---

April third.—Had colic. Squalled.

---

April fourth.—Didn't sleep well last night, as father came home late and made lots of noise. Mamma hasn't had much to say this morning. Very unusual. Looks like rain.

---

April fifth.—Not much doing to-day. Papa asked mamma how her bridge party went. Mamma said she lost five dollars. Papa said: "Five dollars! Do you think I'm made of money?"

"Who dropped \$200 on Silver Streak last fall?" mamma inquired sweetly.

Papa turned red and murmured that accidents would happen. Mamma said yes, they would, but that was no reason for betting on one of them. Papa picked up a poetry book, from the table in a hurry and started to read out loud. He read: "The stag at eve had drunk his fill."

## THE DIARY OF A SHANGHAI BABY

---

"Yes," said mamma, looking at papa. "That is the worst of those stag parties."

Papa said he guessed he would go out and take a walk.

---

April sixth.—Bertie called again to-day and said that he was not feeling well because a few months ago he had had a bad attack of water on the brain. Papa said it was too bad they removed it, as water is better than nothing. Auntie is not speaking to papa now. Grown-ups are very curious.

---

April sixth.—Saw that fresh Jap baby again in Hongkew Park. Made a face at it. Mamma said to-day that we might go to America soon, but that we can't take amah. Very sorry. Hate traveling with strangers. Believe I'll give the family my resignation and try to get a job.

---

April seventh.—Raining again. Spent most of this morning in the basement with amah, watching houseboy and coolie play cards with mamma's new bridge deck. Coolie won two pairs of papa's silk socks from houseboy. No use telling the family, though. They never listen to me.

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

April seventh.—Afternoon and still raining. Papa was late to tiffin and mamma said that he shouldn't have stopped in at the club. Papa said, "How did you know I stopped in at the club? By telepathy?"

"No," said mamma, "I didn't have to use telepathy."

The girl next door passed just then with a man in an automobile, and papa said, "She seems to be getting by all right. Wonder why Ethel can't make it?"

"She's an impertinent little chit," said mamma, looking out of the window.

"Then I suppose you would call that fellow who fetches and carries for her a chit coolie," papa answered.

Nobody said anything more during tiffin. Slept in the afternoon and dreamt I hit that fresh Jap baby from Hongkew Park with my wooden elephant.

---

April eighth.—Mamma was real excited this morning, because she said that the stepsister to amah's grandaunt had died and amah had to show up at the funeral.

## THE DIARY OF A SHANGHAI BABY

---

"Who will take care of our baby?" mamma asked.

"Oh, is that our baby?" said papa, looking surprised. "I always thought it was the amah's."

"Don't get funny," said mamma. "It's a serious proposition. She'll be gone all day. Somebody will have to look after him."

"There's a nomination I could make," papa said.

"You're trying to be ridiculous again. What would my friends think if they saw me wheeling a perambulator?"

"They might think you had a baby," papa said.

Mamma didn't answer this right away, but remarked later that she wondered if amah really was going to a funeral.

"Maybe she belongs to the Literary Section of the Amahs' Friday Morning Club and is going to read a paper on 'Introducing Chinese Civilization Into the Foreign Home'," papa remarked.

"You make me tired," said mamma, leaving the room.

Still sitting on the dining room floor. Guess I'll have to shift for myself to-day.

April eighth.—Didn't go out with mamma after

all. Rather sorry, as I believe in being democratic and cultivating the people I live with, even if I don't know them very well. Mamma turned me over to the houseboy's aunt. Nice old party. Took me to a place where she burned some punk-sticks before a funny-looking gentleman; then undressed me and put some red paper on my chest for good joss. Didn't squall. Thought I'd humor the old girl.

Passed a place in Hongkew on way home, with pictures outside of black-haired man choking lady on top of building. Had glimpse of amah coming out with two other amahs, eating peanuts and giggling. Will snub her next time we meet.

---

April ninth.—Nice weather again. Papa came downstairs after tiffin all dressed up in funny clothes and carrying a lot of clubs. "I'm going out to tee off," he said.

"That's all right as long as you don't tee up," mamma answered.

Can't understand a lot of this talk. Wish they would try to learn my language.



## THE DIARY OF A SHANGHAI BABY

April ninth (later).—Papa came in by and by. Said he saw Bertie on the links. "Yes, he is going to take Ethel and me to a dance to-night," said mamma. "He goes to all the dances at the best cafés."

"And I suppose he takes part in all the most fashionable walks on the Bund and rides on the most exclusive street cars," papa said.

Mamma didn't say any more because funny noises came from downstairs just then, and papa said he was going down to the basement to tell that Chinese Mischa Elman to put some rosin on his bow.

---

April ninth (still later).—Nothing much else happened to-day, except that when I was going to bed I heard papa tell mamma that he missed a lot of silk socks. "Is the houseboy wearing them to the meetings of the Young China Fan Tan Association or have ladies taken up half hose again?" he asked.

"You're always losing things," said mamma. "What became of all that money you took out the other night to play poker with?"

"That's neither here nor there," papa said.

"It certainly isn't here," mamma answered.

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

April ninth (last bulletin).—Have decided to forgive amah after all. Wish I could get a day off myself sometimes. Would like to start something with that fresh Jap baby that makes faces at me in Hongkew Park.

## CHAPTER II

*In Which the Baby Observes Family Life on Sunday Afternoon. . . . He Discovers That He Takes After Both Relations. . . . The Mandarin Coat as a Souvenir. . . . First Battle in the Nippon-Baby War. . . . The Mystery of the Shattered China.*

APRIL tenth.—Sunday again. Like Sunday because there are so many papers on the floor for me to rattle, though family won't let me stay in living room very long. Tailor came this morning with new dress, and mamma told papa that the Chinese have a genius for higher mathematics because they can take seven yards of georgette crepe, make a five-yard dress and have nothing left over. Papa said, "Uh-huh," and turned over the page of his pink sheet to see what Jiggs was doing.

"Look at the baby with the newspaper," said auntie. "Pretty soon he will be reading the comics."

"Yes," said mamma. "If he can ever get them

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

away from his dad." Papa is still reading pictures. Guess I'll play with the Want Ad section.

---

April tenth.—Still Sunday. Auntie put record on phonograph and began to practice new dance. "I'll have to learn all the latest side-steps," said auntie. "Dancing is getting more complicated than ever. Every little movement seems to have a meaning of its own."

"Yes," said papa, "and if some of the meanings were translated into words, they couldn't be sent through the mails. I've certainly seen some weird dancing in this town."

"Have you?" said mamma, looking interested. "I suppose you'll see some more of it when Ethel and I and the baby go away for the summer."

"Well," said papa, "the houseboy is a good fellow and he and I have many things in common, including my tobacco and silk socks, but that doesn't mean that I'm coming home early every evening you're away to play tiddledewinks with him."

Mamma went out and banged door. Through with papers. Wish amah would come upstairs and bring me my wooden elephant. Want bite on back tooth.

## THE DIARY OF A SHANGHAI BABY

---

April tenth.—Sat on dining room floor during tiffin, as amah was busy in basement telling next-door amah all about auntie's dates, Bertie, and mamma's new dress. Papa said that if the house-boy didn't learn that he wanted to eat the food and not merely look at it, he was going to chain down the plates. "He doesn't let a course pause in front of me any longer than the deacon halts the hat when taking up a collection at church. He must be president and corresponding secretary of the Plate-Snatchers' Union," said papa.

"Maybe he is fussed because you are here," said mamma. "He is not very fond of strangers."

"Well, if that cook was as good a performer on the kitchen range as he is on the Chinese piccolo, I wouldn't eat so many meals away from home," papa said.

I started to tell them a little later that I wanted amah to come upstairs and give me some chow.

"Listen to baby," mamma said. "Isn't it funny how he talks all the time without saying anything?"

"I always said he took after you," said papa, reaching for hat and diving toward door.

"I'm not the only member of the family he takes after," mamma shouted down the hall. "Have

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

you ever noticed how fond he is of his bottle?"

Papa shut front door hard and went down street.

---

April eleventh.—Still raining some. Sat in basement while next-door amah told our amah all about the girl in her house. Didn't pay much attention, as was busy watching coolie wash his clothes with mamma's perfumed complexion soap. Other amah went home by and by and our amah cracked some watermelon seeds for me. Pleasant morning.

---

April eleventh.—Mamma told papa at tiffin that she had gotten a letter from Aunt Lucy at home, asking her to send two or three Mandarin coats as souvenirs of China.

"Did she send a check with her little request?" papa asked.

"Not so you could notice it," mamma answered, shaking letter.

"They never do," said papa. "People at home seem to think that all you have to do in China to get a Mandarin coat is to bait a trap with some chop suey and wait for a Mandarin to walk into it. Are you going to send her any?"

## THE DIARY OF A SHANGHAI BABY

---

"No," said mamma. "I've decided to wait until she goes to France this summer and then ask her to send me two or three little frocks from the Rue de la Paix as souvenirs of Paris."

"That's the stuff," said papa.

---

April eleventh (later).—Wish the rain would stop. Want to go out to Hongkew Park and settle things with that fresh Jap baby.

---

April twelfth.—Feeling fine to-day. Amah parked my perambulator next to fresh Jap baby's in Hongkew Park, then went off to talk to Chinese policeman. Jap baby made face at me and tried to grab wooden elephant. First threw wooden elephant on ground out of reach, then leaned over and took Jap baby's bean cake. Later reached for black hair and got some. Amah came back, picked up elephant, and wheeled me away. Who said Jap babies never bawl?

---

April twelfth (later).—Family more stupid than ever. Amah set me in bathroom this morning while she went for clean clothes, as I had spilled Jap bean cake on dress. Saw upstairs coolie cleaning corners of washstand with

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

you ever noticed how fond he is of his bottle?"

Papa shut front door hard and went down street.

---

April eleventh.—Still raining some. Sat in basement while next-door amah told our amah all about the girl in her house. Didn't pay much attention, as was busy watching coolie wash his clothes with mamma's perfumed complexion soap. Other amah went home by and by and our amah cracked some watermelon seeds for me. Pleasant morning.

---

April eleventh.—Mamma told papa at tiffin that she had gotten a letter from Aunt Lucy at home, asking her to send two or three Mandarin coats as souvenirs of China.

"Did she send a check with her little request?" papa asked.

"Not so you could notice it," mamma answered, shaking letter.

"They never do," said papa. "People at home seem to think that all you have to do in China to get a Mandarin coat is to bait a trap with some chop suey and wait for a Mandarin to walk into it. Are you going to send her any?"



## THE DIARY OF A SHANGHAI BABY

"No," said mamma. "I've decided to wait until she goes to France this summer and then ask her to send me two or three little frocks from the Rue de la Paix as souvenirs of Paris."

"That's the stuff," said papa.

---

April eleventh (later).—Wish the rain would stop. Want to go out to Hongkew Park and settle things with that fresh Jap baby.

---

April twelfth.—Feeling fine to-day. Amah parked my perambulator next to fresh Jap baby's in Hongkew Park, then went off to talk to Chinese policeman. Jap baby made face at me and tried to grab wooden elephant. First threw wooden elephant on ground out of reach, then leaned over and took Jap baby's bean cake. Later reached for black hair and got some. Amah came back, picked up elephant, and wheeled me away. Who said Jap babies never bawl?

---

April twelfth (later).—Family more stupid than ever. Amah set me in bathroom this morning while she went for clean clothes, as I had spilled Jap bean cake on dress. Saw upstairs coolie cleaning corners of washstand with

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

mamma's toothbrush. Squalled to call family. Mamma came upstairs and asked amah if safety pin was sticking me. No hope of getting across any real ideas in this house. Had pleasant nap later still holding black hair.

---

April thirteenth.—Fair and warmer. Sat on porch to-day and watched new gardener pull up flowers and leave weeds. Papa said that summer was coming and that he was going to hide his palm beach trousers before the amah kidnaped them to wear as part of her summer sports costume. Nothing else happening except another new tooth in northwest corner of mouth. Wish I could try it out on Jap baby.

---

April fourteenth. — Weather still good. Mamma told papa at tiffin that amah said next door man on right was going to the States.

"Zat so?" said papa, telling boy to bring soup chop-chop. "His sole will be missed by every brass rail in Shanghai. There'll be lots of moaning at the bar when he puts out to sea."

Mamma said that his friends held a farewell party at his house last night and that all the chinaware had been broken.

## THE DIARY OF A SHANGHAI BABY

---

"Judging from his complexion this morning, they drank his farewell toast in Ningpo varnish," said papa.

"He'll have to behave for a while anyway, as he's going on an American liner and the only wet thing around the boat will be the ocean," mamma replied. "He certainly is a wild character. It served him right to have all his chinaware broken."

Tried to tell family that next door houseboy had borrowed our china for party, but mamma told amah to take me out, as I was making too much noise.

---

April fifteenth.—Mamma found out about china to-day. Very angry. Papa said that if mamma would look into the kitchen once in a while, these things wouldn't happen. Mamma said she stayed out of the kitchen as much as possible, because every time she went in, she found out something she didn't want to know. "Last time I dropped in, I saw the cook filling the chow water bottles from the kitchen faucet," mamma said. Houseboy says that he will make up loss by borrowing china from houses where his relations work.

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

Mamma remarked that she would like to sack houseboy, but papa said never mind, as he is going to be married next week and will be punished enough.

---

April fifteenth (later).—Tried out new tooth on hard cake amah bought from street hawker. Seems to be working well. Nobody else has noticed it, though. Wanted to call auntie's attention to it, but she was too busy talking to papa. Auntie was saying that she would like to invite Bertie to dinner.

"He doesn't have much chance to see home life," auntie said. "He lives in a mess."

"I don't doubt it," said papa. "He generally looks like one."

Auntie said papa didn't appreciate Bertie, as he was very clever and was a great student of botany.

"I noticed that he was interested in grass widows," papa said.

"You don't know what a big soul he has, or you wouldn't say such things," said auntie, beginning to cry.

"Don't I, though," said papa. "I'll bet he wears number elevens."

## THE DIARY OF A SHANGHAI BABY

---

Can't make anybody pay attention to tooth. Have thought some of squalling, but what is the use? They would only undress me to look for safety pins.

### CHAPTER III

*In Which the Baby Finds That He Can't Stand the Social Pace. . . . The Inconveniences of Being Kissed by Company. . . . The Elusive Bachelor in Shanghai. . . . Cold Jelly-Fish versus Stocking Feet.*

APRIL sixteenth.—Sleepy to-day, as family kept me awake last night getting ready to go to dinner party. Wish crib was up in attic. Noise began as soon as they came upstairs.

"Is it a boiled shirt affair?" asked papa, looking out of bathroom with lather on face.

"Of course," said mamma. "Were you contemplating wearing your golf-suit?"

"I was contemplating not going at all," said papa. "Last time I went there a fat woman we played bridge with mistook my foot for her husband's and stepped on it every time they bid. I was lame for a week."

"You don't want to go any less than I do," said mamma. "I went to a tea party to-day and I'm all worn out."

## THE DIARY OF A SHANGHAI BABY

---

"Well," said papa, looking at mamma's evening dress, "if that's the way I felt about it, I'd put some clothes on and go to bed."

"Go on and get ready," said mamma, jabbing tortoise shell ornament into hair.

A few minutes later papa came back to ask if Ethel wasn't going. "She's late again," said mamma.

"I suppose she stopped to have a permanent wave put in her finger nails or something," said papa, looking for pearl stud under bed.

Just as they left I heard mamma tell papa to keep an eye on the spoons, as she was trying to locate half a dozen that the houseboy loaned out a month ago.

Have decided to start reprisals if family continues to make noise going to parties. Would like to organize other Shanghai babies into a union for an eight-hour day.

---

April seventeenth.—Family came down late to breakfast on account of party. Mamma told papa he should have known enough to return his partner's lead on hearts in the last rubber.

"I didn't realize I'd borrowed it from her," said papa. "It's too late to return it now unless

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

I do it by chit. Besides, that will even us up a little. Her husband took \$100 from me two months ago and hasn't returned it yet."

Mamma didn't say anything but stirred coffee hard.

"Anyway," said papa after a moment, "I don't go through a whole hand with my mind in a millinery shop and then come up for air to ask what's trumps."

"Who does that?" asked mamma sweetly.

"I read somewhere that the late Empress Dowager did," said papa, looking at toast with interest.

No more conversation during breakfast.

---

April seventeenth (later).—Company came in afternoon. Expected trouble when I heard mamma tell amah to put on my filet lace dress, as I was to be brought downstairs for a while. Tried to crawl behind linen in closet, but amah found me and hauled me out. Hate company. First fat woman kissed me and said I was a "diddle, diddle dumpkin." Then thin woman kissed me and said I was a "witchykitchy sweetheart." Then a bald-headed man kissed me and said I was a regular little Jack Dempsey.



## THE DIARY OF A SHANGHAI BABY

---

"He's such a fine baby it's easy to see he has a mother's personal care," said one lady.

"He surely has," said mamma, looking pleased. Wonder if amah is a mother.

---

April seventeenth (still later).—Company finally drifted into next room to have tea and forgot me. Had a pleasant time playing with coal in brass hod and listening to conversation. Heard bald-headed man remark that he had a headache this afternoon, as he had taken several grains of quinine and it always made him dizzy. Surprised to hear this, as it was not quinine I noticed when he kissed me. He also said that he always takes a great deal of medicine in the East, as the drinking water doesn't agree with him.

"How did you happen to find out?" asked papa politely.

Mamma kicked papa under table and started sudden conversation about expedition into Thibet.

"It must be terribly thrilling to be among wild people and wild animals," said fat lady.

"Oh, I don't know," answered papa. "You can see enough wild people here in Shanghai, and if you're pining for wild animals just wait until the mosquito season opens."

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

"I think it must be very exciting," said mamma, giving papa quick expression. "Sometimes I wish I had married an explorer."

"You have," said papa, reaching for cookie. "I'm just about to apply for a medal from the Royal Geographical Society. Yesterday, alone and unassisted, I found three addresses on Dixwell Road."

Thin lady said she heard that in Thibet they made statues of butter and kept them for as long as a year.

"Now I know where some of the dairies in Shanghai get their supply," said papa.

Went to sleep leaning against coal hod. When I woke up, company had left to go to concert and mamma was telling papa that he was hopelessly low brow.

---

April eighteenth.—Bertie expected for dinner to-day. Auntie very excited. Bought some long-stemmed flowers and put them in vases on either side of the grate. Also spent hour before glass trying hair new way. I was downstairs when Bertie came and heard him remark that he was looking forward to going on a paper hunt.

"It's about time," said papa, who had come in

## THE DIARY OF A SHANGHAI BABY

from office. "I go on one six days a week, trying to pick up paper with some government printing on it. It's a great sport."

Bertie said that he was thinking of giving up his present place to become a broker.

"Would you ride around town in one of those dear little traps?" asked auntie, clasping her hands. "I think they're too sweet for words."

"Yes," said papa. "They're a great sight. Every morning the brokers stage a Ben Hur chariot race on the Bund, most of them standing up in the pose of an ancient Roman with short petticoats and a fillet around his brow. Every time exchange drops a ha'penny, the mafoo hits the horse, and when it drops a penny, he runs over a ricksha coolie."

Didn't hear any more, as was busy pulling heads off long-stemmed flowers which flower man had fastened on with pins.

---

April nineteenth.—Fair weather this morning. Took off one more layer of clothes. Mamma asked auntie if Bertie had said anything yet. "Nothing except that it was a nice day yesterday," said auntie, looking cross.

Auntie spent rest of morning playing sad music

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

on phonograph. Papa came in for tiffin while she was trying "Where is My Wandering Boy To-night?" and stood up straight with hand at forehead.

"Why are you standing up?" said mamma, coming in.

"That's Shanghai's national anthem," said papa, sitting down at end of record.

Spent some time in basement with amah, trying to make friends with cook's cat. Rather nice pussy, but don't like the way he sings. Sounds like auntie taking vocal culture.

---

April nineteenth.—Heard mamma tell papa that houseboy was going to be married in a few days and that family should give him a present.

"What's the idea?" asked papa. "We don't owe him any present. He's been harvesting his trousseau from my wardrobe for the past three months."

Mamma said if we lost this houseboy, we might get another not interested in wardrobe but fond of family jewelry. Papa said that we might as well give him a present, as he would take one anyway. "What shall it be—a silver nut dish or a brass card-receiver?" papa asked.

## THE DIARY OF A SHANGHAI BABY

"Neither, of course," said mamma. "It ought to be something practical, that he could use every day."

"How about an alarm clock?" asked papa.

Family still arguing when amah brought my bottle and piece of candied ginger cousin sent from Canton.

---

April nineteenth.—Quiet afternoon. Heard mamma wondering why living room couch always looked so untidy in the morning. Could have told her that cook's brother-in-law, who is out of job, sleeps there every night after family goes upstairs, but mamma never talks to me unless to say "da-da" once in a while. Family rather snobbish. Glad amah and I move in same social circle.

---

April nineteenth.—Papa came home early and mamma told him that they were going to sukiaki with people they had met at card party.

"Whose bright idea was that?" asked papa.

"Why don't you like a sukiaki?" said mamma.

"I can think of other ways of enjoying myself besides sitting in my stocking feet on the floor eating Japanese stew and cold devil fish," said papa.

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

"Besides, I never went to one of those affairs yet that I didn't have a hole in my sock, and had to walk with my feet drawn up, so people couldn't see it."

"That's your own fault," said mamma.

"Oh, is it?" asked papa. "Well, if I'm expected to do the embroidery on my own hosiery, I may as well borrow some Chinese clothes and hire out as a Number 2 Amah."

Nothing more said about stockings just then, but later heard papa ask mamma to lend him some court-plaster as he had discovered hole.

---

April twentieth.—Went out this morning with amah and wooden elephant. Elephant very nice to bite tooth on, but always falling out of perambulator into street. Amah kind about picking it up and giving it back to me. Know taste of every street in Shanghai.

## CHAPTER IV

*In Which the Baby Hears a Conversation on Art as She is Daubed. . . . Later Observes the Chinese Art of Squeeze. . . . Indications of Gentle Spring in the Far East. . . . Why Cæsar Crossed the Rubicon.*

APRIL twentieth.—Mamma received picture from America, which she said Aunt Mary sent her for anniversary present. "Isn't it a wonderful work of art?" said mamma, showing it to papa.

"It surely is," said papa, turning frame. "Which way do you look at it?"

"It's a view of the sun setting behind waves," said mamma, snatching it away.

"Oh, is it?" asked papa. "I thought it was a ripe tomato rising above a sheaf of lettuce leaves."

Mamma said papa had no appreciation of art, and papa said that he had and could prove it by bringing home picture which friend had just given him called "Nymph Among the Flowers."

"I'm not sure we would want that in our home," mamma answered.

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

"Oh, it's perfectly O.K." papa said. "It was done after the Futurist School and might just as well have been entitled 'Electrical Buzz Saw in Action.' "

Family stopped talking about pictures, as wash-man came just then and mamma wanted to know why all family linen had changed initials in last five days.

---

April twenty-first.—Pleasant weather. Sat on porch with wooden elephant and watched our coolie cut flowers from next-door garden. Later coolie came in and collected twenty cents from mamma to pay flower-man. Just wait until I can talk.

---

April twenty-first.—Auntie said at tiffin to-day that she was going to tea-dance with new man named Cyril. "Everybody says that he is a wonderful dancer," said auntie. "He has made a name for himself."

"He has made several names for himself, and he uses them when he signs chits," said papa.

"I think you are too mean for words," said auntie, struggling to cut chop.

"Well," said papa, "I wouldn't pin too much



## THE DIARY OF A SHANGHAI BABY

faith to a wonderful dancer. You can't eat a fox-trot."

Mamma said it was a good thing young men in town had the habit of hiring cars, as a girl couldn't make much progress otherwise on account of rickshas being so unsociable.

"They ought to build them tandem," said papa.

When family stopped talking about rickshas, papa remarked that mamma ought to tell the cook not to buy any more Peking camels, as he had blisters on his hands from trying to cut the meat.

---

April twenty-first.—Nice afternoon. Went out with amah in perambulator. Saw fresh Jap baby on Jap amah's back. Looked very foolish. Glad I don't have to wear kimono in street.

---

April twenty-first.—Came home later and saw Cyril arrive to take auntie to tea dance. Neighbor lady also calling.

"Isn't Shanghai just too cosmopolitan for anything?" said auntie, sitting on edge of chair and starting conversation.

Didn't hear more, as mamma remarked to neighbor lady that amah had kept me out a long time that afternoon, but that she didn't mind

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

because the fresh air did me good. Amah didn't say that we spent afternoon with other amahs in moving picture show, seeing fine film of lady tied to railroad track by gentleman.

---

April twenty-second.—Nice day. Mamma took accounts with cook this morning, and when papa came home at noon she showed him grocery bill.

"Do you think we could have eaten as much as that?" she said.

"Not unless we kept an orphan asylum," said papa, reading total. "He must have added in the average annual rainfall and the gross tonnage of the Empress of Asia."

"We'd better not be too hard on him," said mamma. "Maybe we do eat more than we realize. Only this morning he showed me that the coffee can was empty again."

Guess cook didn't mention dipping out of can every day to fill two other cans on shelf. Probably amah will keep me out of kitchen when family begins to understand my language.

---

April twenty-third.—Raining. Mamma and papa talked at breakfast about dinner they will

## THE DIARY OF A SHANGHAI BABY

give next week for taipan. Mamma said that they will have to invite one more man and suggested friend in mess. "I've heard people say that he's pretty good in a party," said mamma.

"He is in some ways, but I've noticed that when the chits come around, he always gets writers' cramp," said papa.

Mamma said that they would have to ask him, as there wasn't much time left, and that she would send coolie over with note.

"If you're in a hurry, you'd better mail it," said papa, starting for office.

Mamma went out herself soon afterwards, because she told auntie that she was going to try to find a spring hat under fifty dollars that didn't look as if it had gone through the Kansu earthquake.

---

April twenty-third (afternoon).—Still raining in afternoon. Lady who writes poetry called after tiffin and asked papa if he had observed the evidences of spring.

"Yes," said papa. "I've noticed that all the drugstores have taken in the cold remedies and are featuring the cholera cures."

"Haven't you observed other indications?" asked lady, looking disappointed.

"The ricksha coolies are taking off more clothes," said papa.

"But surely you feel a thrill of happiness because winter is over," lady said. "Doesn't it mean something to you?"

"It means something to me, but it doesn't give me a thrill of happiness," papa answered. "It means that pretty soon I'll have to wear a monkey jacket, and every time I put one on, I feel that I ought to pick up the card tray and page somebody."

Mamma came downstairs just then, and papa sneaked out toward Race Course. Wish he'd take me some time. Tired of going to park and hearing amahs talk about new family that just moved to Frenchtown.

---

April twenty-fourth.—Sunday. Sat on floor in living room and heard family talk about next-door automobile. "I wish we had a car," said mamma, looking out window.

"Why?" asked papa. "We don't know anybody in Woosung."

## THE DIARY OF A SHANGHAI BABY

"There are plenty of places to go besides Woon-sung," said mamma.

"No place that I know except the Rubicon," said papa, "and I've been around that so many times that I don't wonder Julius Caesar got impatient and crossed it instead."

"It isn't so much a question of where you can go as the impression a motor car makes on members of the community," mamma answered.

Papa said yes, that most cars did make impressions on members of the community, but they were usually made on Chinese members who didn't jump fast enough.

Mamma picked up fashion paper and turned leaves with rattle.

---

April twenty-fourth (later).—Had pleasant nap upstairs, but woke up later and saw coolie trying on mamma's new spring hat before mirror. I'd just like to catch him putting on my bonnet!

## CHAPTER V

*In Which the Baby Finds That a Dinner Party Takes as Much Preparation as a Battle and is About the Same Thing in the End. . . . The Diplomatic Houseboy Gets a Line on the Taipan's Dinner Clothes. . . . Papa's Friend Believes in Preparedness.*

APRIL twenty-fifth.—Went out calling on amah's third cousin who lives on little street near Nanzing Road. Perfumes very unusual. Not a bit like mamma's talcum. Don't remember much of visit, as went to sleep on bed with Chinese baby getting over mumps. Later amah let me drink tea from her cup and gave me piece of fried dumpling. Pleasant morning.

---

April twenty-sixth.—Nobody paying any attention to me to-day. Everybody getting ready for taipan's dinner. Amah busy making red paper frills. Mamma busy making place cards. Cook busy making menu. Auntie busy making complexion. Houseboy busy making trouble. Hope they don't forget my chow.

## THE DIARY OF A SHANGHAI BABY

---

April twenty-sixth (later).—Papa came home to tiffin and brought fresh lettuce.

"It's perfectly safe," he said. "One of the men in the office grew it in his own garden."

"I'm so glad," said mamma. "I'm as hungry for lettuce as a rabbit. I'll send it right down to the cook to get ready for to-night."

Sat in kitchen later while amah tried on Paris garters she had found in papa's bureau drawer. Had interesting time watching cook blow mouthfuls of water on sanitary lettuce to keep it fresh.

---

April twenty-sixth.—Still sitting in living room. Family forgot to have me put to bed. Table all ready for taipan's party. Mamma called downstairs to papa and asked him what he was doing.

"Reading a love story in the *Municipal Gazette*," said papa. "Can't I sit down for five minutes without giving an account of myself?"

"Go in the dining room and compare the place cards with the initials on the knives and forks," said mamma. "The houseboy borrowed from all over so as not to have dishwashing between courses and I want to make sure that nobody gets his own silver."

Mamma said later that she had decided upon

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

everything except the person who was to sit on papa's left.

"Well, don't go and pick out a century plant," said papa, taking salted peanut from red paper dish. "The last one you put me next to remembered the inauguration of Lincoln."

Squalled at this point and was taken upstairs, but couldn't sleep anyway on account of noise. Heard papa ask mamma what had become of his pearl studs.

"I gave them to the baby for cough drops," said mamma, with unpleasant look in voice. Papa said all right, that she didn't need to tell him if she didn't want to, but if he didn't find them he would wear my safety pins.

---

April twenty-sixth (last bulletin).—Papa wondering if taipan would wear evening suit or dinner coat. "If he wears a dress suit, I don't want to show up in a dinner coat, and if he comes in a dinner coat, I don't want to put something over on him by wearing an evening suit," said papa. Mamma said he might send the houseboy over to ask taipan's houseboy what his master was putting on.

"I'm afraid he'd tip it off to the taipan," said



## THE DIARY OF A SHANGHAI BABY

---

papa. Mamma said she didn't think so, and that anyway the Orientals have a grand reputation for diplomacy. Houseboy went, but came back pretty soon. Told papa that other master sent compliments and said he would wear evening dress and that his wife was going to wear low-necked purple gown with pearl necklace. Did not catch papa's remark, but heard shoe falling downstairs after houseboy.

Sometime when feeling good, I will get even with family by squalling all night.

---

April twenty-seventh.—Everybody cross to-day after taipan's dinner. Papa said party would have been a success if houseboy had not served dinner from behind heavy garlic barrage. Mamma said it was papa's fault for telling story he had heard at club and for spearing olives with fork. Auntie cross because Bertie led her aside to say something special and then asked her for piece of baby ribbon to tie up his lamp shade. Cook cross because people ate so much that he had nothing left over for cousins. Family living to-day on salted peanuts, fudge, and ripe olives. Glad we don't have dinners often.

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

April twenty-eighth.—Had interesting morning sitting on living room floor and trying new tooth on carved wood screen. Heard mamma remark that she had met papa's friend and that he looked as if he were going to be best man at a hanging.

"He is upset because he is going home on the Golden State," said papa. "He is afraid his suitcases will leak."

"Is the Golden State going to be dry?" asked mamma.

"Theoretically, yes," said papa, "but thus far there have been 103½ more tons of baggage than freight shipped on board, and practically all of it would splash if roughly handled."

"But won't they be caught by the Department of Justice when they land in San Francisco?" asked mamma.

"Oh, no," said papa. "By the time they reach San Francisco, it will be a case for the Department of the Interior."

Spent part of afternoon sitting in pen on porch and hearing mamma tell the neighbor lady that her hair had come out something terrible since living in Shanghai and that pretty soon she would not have enough for side puffs.

## CHAPTER VI

*In Which the Baby Hears About the Carlton and Proposals. . . . Papa Tries Going in a Pool. . . . Auntie Has Idea for Safe and Sane Bet. . . . Bridge as a Means of Promoting Harmony.*

APRIL twenty-ninth.—Not much doing to-day. Spent part of morning in basement, hearing coolie play music on Chinese fiddle. Very good noise. Couldn't do better myself.

---

April twenty-ninth.—Auntie upset to-day because she heard Bertie was going with girl in Frenchtown. Papa asked if auntie had ever seen her. "Yes, she was at the Carlton the other night," said auntie. "She was the one who didn't have enough clothes on and who danced so funny."

"You don't expect me to pick her out from that, do you?" asked papa. "The description fits ninety per cent of the women there."

Auntie said she thought papa was impolite and remarked that anyway she didn't care about Bertie, as there were plenty of other men. "A

man proposed to me on the boat coming over," said auntie.

"What was the matter with him?" asked papa.  
"Was he seasick?"

"He was nothing of the sort," said auntie, with mad edge in voice. "He asked me to marry him the third day out."

"I'll bet he didn't say it loud enough for you to hear him," said papa, eating 205th salted peanut. Auntie said that anyway she knew Cyril was in love with her, as she could tell by the way he looked at her when she wasn't looking at him. Papa told her that her periscope seemed to be in pretty good working order, but that she ought to be careful not to get a kink in her neck.

---

April thirtieth.—Pleasant day. Amah, cook, houseboy, and coolie excited about something called sweepstake. Nobody paid much attention to me, but not sorry, as had found can of syrup that oozed at top.

"I'm going in a pool with the fellows at the office," said papa, coming in for tiffin.

"Isn't it rather early for swimming?" asked mamma, looking up from *Ladies' Home Journal*.

Papa started to say something, but stopped and

## THE DIARY OF A SHANGHAI BABY

remarked that yes, it was, but this time he was hoping to pick up a little seaweed.

Wish he'd give some to me, as would like to see if it is good to try on new tooth.

---

May first.—Not much doing to-day. Sat in dining room for a while trying to lick color off of red and blue round things which I found on floor. Color didn't come off very well. Later stayed in kitchen with amah while cook was fixing tiffin. Cook's cat took piece of fish from shelf and began to eat it on floor. Cook took fish away from cat and put it on frying pan. Was surprised cat was hungry, as had heard papa tell friend that he had sat up most of the night feeding the kitty.

---

May first.—Mamma cross at tiffin. Told papa that the low brow friends he met at the club had no place in a proper home.

"That tall one who just came out from the States is round-shouldered from getting in and out of patrol wagons," said mamma. Papa said that some of mamma's friends were not so many laps ahead and that stout lady was so uncultured that she thought "The Lays of Ancient Rome" had something to do with eggs.

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

"Besides, she's so fat that she has to ride around in two rickshas," papa remarked.

No more noise during tiffin.

---

May second.—Rain. Stayed home and heard coolie play fiddle. Mamma said that the only thing worse than man learning to play cornet was man learning to play Chinese musical instrument.

"The trouble is you never can tell when they've learned," said papa.

Hope coolie doesn't get into habit, as family couldn't tell difference in case I wanted to squall for something.

---

May second.—Papa didn't go to office this afternoon on account of races. Asked auntie if she wanted to put up a bet. "Will they give me my money back in case my horse doesn't win?" auntie inquired.

"Of course," said papa. "Do you think they would be mean enough to keep it?"

Auntie said that she had read a lot about race-course sharks and wanted to be careful.

---

May second.—Still raining. Nothing to do but stay home with wooden elephant and watch coolie

## THE DIARY OF A SHANGHAI BABY

sweep dust under living room lounge. Papa came home later, and mamma asked him if his favorite had won.

"That horse was so slow coming in that the judges thought he was winning the next race," said papa, pulling off gloves with unpleasant look. "He certainly was one poor runner."

"How much did it cost you to find that out?" asked mamma, but papa had started upstairs to get money out of mamma's purse for ricksha man.

---

May third.—Sat in dining room and heard family talk about bridge they had gone to at place called Columbia Country Club. Papa remarked that the family scores, taken together, about equalled the number of votes a cross-eyed girl would get in a beauty contest.

"It's too bad we didn't play mah-jong instead," said mamma. "We might have won the mah-jong set."

"Yes," papa answered, "think of all the fun the baby could have had swallowing the counters."

Papa said after a moment that he always had been keen about bridge. "I love the sprightly conversation that goes during a bridge game and

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

the kindly looks that are exchanged among the players," papa remarked. "I am also fond of the lady who holds a coroner's inquest over every hand and digs back thirteen tricks to call you to time for not having led the fourth best of your strongest suit. The only time I'm happy playing bridge is when I'm the dummy."

"That's because you feel so natural," said mamma.

Papa started to say something, but began to whistle "Kiss Me Again" and went out to office.

---

May third.—Family all worked up at tiffin because I said "Daddy." Nothing to get excited over, as have been saying it for past month. Only trouble is that family never listens to me.

---

May third (later).—Auntie went out to races with Cyril. Came home afterwards and papa asked her how she had liked them.

"Oh, they were fine," said auntie. "I saw the cutest duvetyrn dress cut Directoire, and a perfectly stunning lavender raincoat with a white rubber flower on the hat."

"But who won the races?" asked papa.



## THE DIARY OF A SHANGHAI BABY

---

"Oh, a lot of horses," said auntie, pulling out hatpin. "I don't know their names."

Papa said that if auntie went to an execution, she probably wouldn't know if the man was being shot for stealing jade or for passing another automobile on Nanking Road.

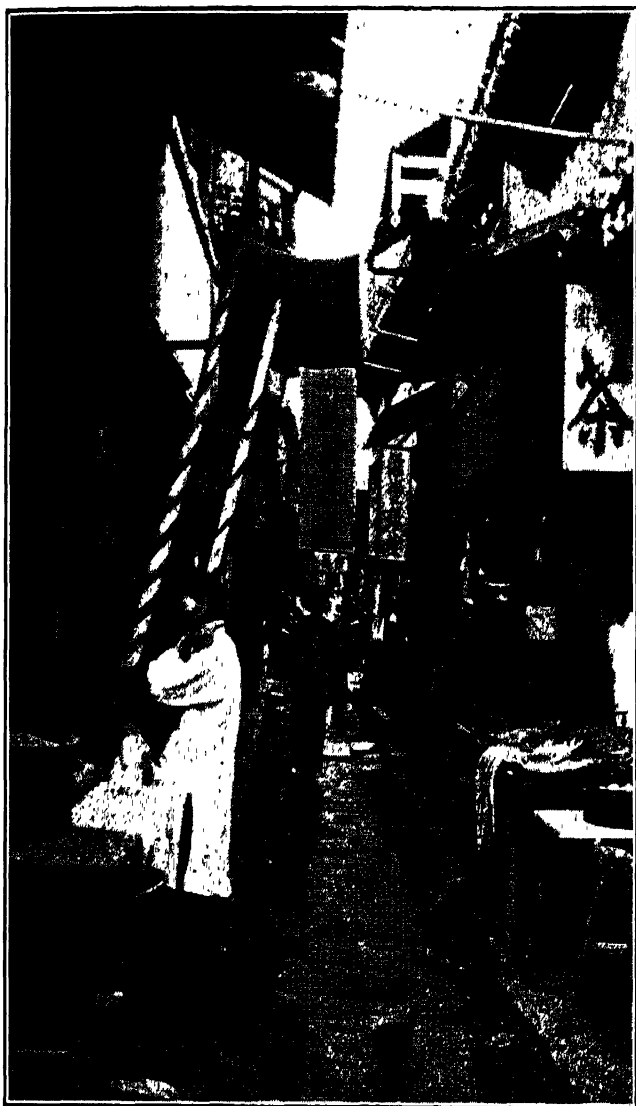
## CHAPTER VII

*In Which the Baby is Perturbed by Cucumbers and the Spring Meet. . . . The Pleasures of House-Boating. . . . The Jap Baby Springs a New Accomplishment, Thereby Upsetting Some Deep-laid Plans.*

MAY fourth.—Everybody gone to races to-day. Cook took bird-cage and went after tiffin. House-boy went to dentist for toothache, but saw dentist at same place. Nobody home but amah and me. Pretty soon amah put me in perambulator and wheeled me to house of old Chinese lady, then went out toward Bubbling Well. Old lady gave me nice piece of cucumber to chew, which she told amah wouldn't hurt me because it was too big for me to swallow. Fooled her. Swallowed it. Would like to live in this house, as would enjoy chickens roosting on crib.

---

May fourth (later).—Amah came back in hurry, wheeled me in rear entrance of home, took off bonnet, and had me sitting in pen when family



Amah's friends all live on Chinese boulevards.



## THE DIARY OF A SHANGHAI BABY

---

came in front way. Told mamma I had slept upstairs all afternoon. Surprised that amah has such poor memory. Papa said that married men always lost, as he had won \$50 in Pari-Mutuel, but had to spend \$250 to dress up family for races. "Anyway, a lot of people looked at me in my new clothes," said mamma. Papa said a lot more would have looked at her if she had just blacked her face, and it wouldn't have been nearly as expensive.

Cyril came in by and by, looking unhappy. Said that he had been tipped off on a pony. "Did you hurt yourself much when you fell?" asked Auntie. "About a hundred dollars' worth," said Cyril. Auntie said it was awful the way the doctors charge in this town and that Cyril should be more careful in his riding.

---

May fifth.—Something wrong inside. Squalled all day. Mamma said climate doesn't agree with me. Don't remember eating any climate.

---

May sixth.—Somewhat better. Went out with amah to Hongkew Park and saw fresh Jap baby. Looked in other direction as am not feeling in good trim yet.

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

May sixth.—Family talking about invitation to go on houseboat trip. Mamma asked papa if he would like to go. “Why should I?” asked papa. “All I have to do is to take the springs out of my bed and saw off the end so that I have to sleep doubled up like a Duplex apartment. Then I need only tell the boy to break all the bottles of chow water and forget some important articles of diet; limit the family to one wash basin; hire some fragrances strong enough to walk up and shake hands; and engage a lot of coolies to look in the window while I’m dressing, and I can have just as much fun as if I were on a houseboat trip. I never went on a houseboat party yet where the boy didn’t break the water bottles. It must be a rule in the Chinese civil code.”

Mamma said that papa probably didn’t miss the water bottles very much, and papa said that he wouldn’t get the credit for it even if he did. Papa remarked later that families who went on houseboat parties together either parted mortal enemies or else had so much on each other that they had to stay good friends.

---

May seventh.—Nice day. Sat in kitchen and watched cook scrub potatoes with old hair brush.

## THE DIARY OF A SHANGHAI BABY

Later enjoyed pleasant time while cook's wife and amah had argument over winnings on Pari-Mutuel ticket. Cook's wife bit amah's ear. Many remarks about ancestors. Busy morning.

---

May seventh (later).—Mamma remarked at tiffin that hot weather would soon be here and that papa ought to buy a pith helmet. "I have no ambition to go around town looking like Livingstone exploring Africa," said papa. "The chief thing I am going to get for the hot weather is a little printed card saying, 'No, I wouldn't mind the heat if it wasn't for the humidity.' By pinning it to my lapel I'll be saved the trouble of saying it 999 times a day."

"What will you find to talk about?" asked mamma.

"Just watch me," said papa.

Mamma remarked that she had every intention of doing so.

---

May seventh.—Papa came home wearing court-plaster on countenance. Said he was going to find new barber as he was tired of losing so much face. Think court-plaster would be very becoming to Jap baby. Will practice throwing wooden

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

elephant so as to be ready for next trip to Hongkew Park.

May eighth.—Not much doing to-day. Had pleasant time upstairs while family went for ride in car, watching houseboy take shave with papa's new safety razor. Later saw him put on some of mamma's Mary Garden perfume. Perfume had hard fight with garlic. Garlic won. Will try to keep an eye on my talcum powder.

---

May eighth (later).—Sat on floor with wooden elephant while family ate tiffin. Surprised to hear papa say that trains during war were protected by amah. Didn't know she traveled.

---

May ninth.—Went out to Hongkew Park and saw fresh Jap baby wearing white apron on top of kimono and little flat red hat on head. Silly get-up. Jap family excited because baby could step alone. Awfully stuck on itself. Have decided not to throw wooden elephant, as didn't know Jap baby could walk.

---

May ninth.—Papa came home for tiffin and



## THE DIARY OF A SHANGHAI BABY

mamma told him about new sweater which aunt at home had sent her.

"It would be nice to have Aunt Mary come out to visit us," said mamma.

"I don't think she would like the Soochow bathtubs," said papa with unhappy look. "Nobody but a cobra could be comfortable in one."

"I had no intention of asking her to sleep in a Soochow bathtub," said mamma, giving papa quick expression. "If she was your aunt, you'd want to give her the best room, but just because she's mine you don't care what becomes of her."

Papa said that there are ants enough around in the summer time eating up the provisions, without sending for another from America.

---

May ninth.—Had busy time later chinning self on side of pen. Will walk soon if lucky. Afterwards went upstairs for nap and saw new coolie mopping floor with mamma's sweater on broomstick. Pleasant afternoon.

---

May tenth.—Nice day. Mamma has taught amah to put funny glass thing in my mouth and then read what it says. Told amah she must wash

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

it first. Amah washes it, then tastes it to see if it is all right before giving it to me. Can't find any sense in stunt, but then have stopped expecting much of family.

---

May eleventh.—Family had busy time to-day talking about place to go for summer. Papa said he would like to go somewhere where there is good hunting. Mamma answered that he could find that in any resort and he wouldn't have to go out of his room, either.

Papa said later that he hoped to find place where shoes were something to put on feet and not ground for green vegetable garden.

"Why not ask our friends about good places?" asked mamma.

"We might try it, but I've noticed that people are always strongest for the resorts they haven't visited," papa answered.

Rather looks at present as if family is going to Tsingtao. Hope so, as might find Jap babies there that haven't learned to walk. Have decided to save wooden elephant.

---

May twelfth.—Papa said that to-morrow

## THE DIARY OF A SHANGHAI BABY

would be Friday the thirteenth and auntie asked him if he was superstitious.

"Yes," said papa, "I always used to hate to get thirteen days in jail for speeding and I never do like to pay bills that fall due on Friday."

Auntie said she didn't wish anybody any bad luck, but that she hoped girl from Frenchtown would fall down at tea dance and sprain her costume.

## CHAPTER VIII

*In Which the Baby Decides That the Life of Infant in Shanghai is One Round of Friday the Thirteenth. . . . New Hope for the Jessfield Monkey-House. . . . The Baby Tries to Help Out a Romantic Situation.*

MAY twelfth.—Porch covered with woolen things being aired for summer. Mamma said she was going to put them in moth-proof bags. Papa said that amah-proof box would be more to point. Wish there was such a thing as amah-proof baby.

---

May thirteenth.—Friday to-day. Family said day means bad luck. Can't see that luck is any worse than usual. Stuck by the same number of safety pins and have same funny feeling in mouth where new tooth is coming. Amah very busy telling all other amahs in town about family going to Tsingtao for summer. Papa told mamma at tiffin that she must be raising me on cafeteria plan, as there wasn't anybody to wait on me.

## THE DIARY OF A SHANGHAI BABY

Didn't mind being left alone, as was busy upstairs watching new coolie clean bathtub with mamma's crocheted washcloth.

May thirteenth.—Mamma asked papa if he had any bad luck to-day. "Every day is Friday the thirteenth to a married man," said papa, reading bill for mamma's new dress. Mamma said that she could have married half a dozen nice men at home, and papa said it was too bad she didn't as she needed that many to pay for clothes. Auntie said just then that papa didn't realize how expensive clothes were, as she had just paid ten dollars a yard for dress to wear to Carlton.

"That oughtn't to be so expensive," said papa. "You don't need more than a yard."

Mamma answered that she was not going around town looking like wife of a poor man, and papa replied that poor men's wives were best-dressed women in Shanghai, as that was why husbands were poor.

---

May thirteenth.—Had interesting ride in perambulator. Passed Hongkew Market and saw poultry man make dead ducks fat by blowing up at wind pipe. Also saw fish men painting

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

fresh red gills on old-fashioned fish. Later had glimpse of family cook doing shopping. Glad I take my tiffins out of a bottle.

---

May thirteenth.—Papa came home early and had busy time trying to get number on telephone. Mamma told him he should be ashamed to swear in front of baby. "Turn the baby around," said papa.

"These gentlemen hello-girls make all the connections by absent treatment," papa remarked, after saying prayers. "We're so used to not getting the number that if all the staff walked out on strike Shanghai people wouldn't know it until they read it in the paper. You stand about as much chance of getting the right number on a Shanghai telephone as you do in the Sweep-stake."

Papa remarked later that people who wandered forty years in wilderness were probably trying to get the land of Canaan on the telephone.

"There weren't any telephones in Bible times," said mamma.

"Of course there were," said papa. "Didn't you ever hear of the Book of Numbers?"

## THE DIARY OF A SHANGHAI BABY

Central interrupted them to tell papa that line was engaged and also out of order. Amah carried me out in hurry.

---

May fourteenth.—Pleasant day. Sat on porch while amah pulled out her front hair with string and pasted pieces of black court-plaster on forehead for headache. Papa came home for tiffin and auntie asked him if he was going in for any kind of spring athletics.

"No," said papa, "I get plenty of exercise sprinting into the house after paying a ricksha coolie, so as to arrive ahead of the row. I used to be a shark at baseball, but I haven't any time to practice."

"You are still good at catching highballs," said mamma. Papa said he was glad to hear mamma admit that he was good at something. Rest of tiffin quiet except for soup.

Papa remarked later after finding coolie brushing bureau with silk shirt that he was sorry rate-papers wouldn't allow Municipal Council to build the \$10,000 monkey house in Jessfield Park, as he would like to contribute new upstairs coolie and might also be persuaded to part with house-boy.

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

May fourteenth.—Had ride to Hongkew Park. No sign of Jap baby. Hope it is walking back to Japan.

---

May fifteenth.—Nice day. Family excited because I said "Mamma." Was really trying to say "Amah" but can't make family understand my language. Papa said that mamma had better pay a little more attention to me when I began to talk.

"What about my bridge parties?" asked mamma.

"Teach the baby to score and then you can take him with you," said papa. "If he stays in the back of the house all the time, he will learn to swear in Chinese."

"Yes, and if he stays in the front of the house, he will learn to swear in English," said mamma, looking at papa. Papa said that he guessed he had a right to say something when he found that houseboy had put fly-paper in bureau drawer to keep moths away from golf socks.

---

May fifteenth (later).—Sat on floor while family read paper. Auntie asked meaning of "P.



## THE DIARY OF A SHANGHAI BABY

P. C." which she had seen in corner of friend's card.

"I've heard that it means 'Please Postpone Chits'," said mamma.

"I've also known cases where it stood for 'Payment Permanently Canceled,' " papa remarked.

Mamma said family would have to send steamer present to friends and suggested basket of flowers.

"Yes," said papa. "People in a stateroom so small that they have to sleep with their hats on because they have no place to put them always appreciate a basket of flowers. Besides, it is such a comfort when you have  $31\frac{1}{2}$  pieces of hand luggage to have a kind friend rush up and make it  $32\frac{1}{2}$ ."

Mamma remarked that she might send box of candy, only friend would not appreciate it after the first day out. "I'll look around the house and try to find something that I don't use very often and wouldn't miss much," mamma said.

"Why not send them the baby?" papa inquired.

Papa said later that maybe friends would not appreciate family coming to see them off, as many people preferred to stay inside tender until it got too far away from jetty for shroffs to jump.

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

May sixteenth.—Amah bought me new black rubber thing to-day. Thought I was getting chow, but found out it was bluff. Disappointed to find no connection. Wonder if they think they are really fooling me. Wouldn't hold it in Hongkew Park, as didn't want Jap baby to think I was being taken in.

---

May seventeenth.—Pleasant weather. Auntie said this morning that Cyril had invited her to go to lecture on "Theory of Relativity." "Do you know what that is?" she asked mamma.

"I don't know for certain, but I think it is about how to get along with your relatives," mamma said.

Hope they all go. Maybe they'll learn more about getting along with me.

---

May eighteenth.—Had pleasant trip to Hongkew Park. Rubber thing fell out of perambulator. Hoped I had lost it, but amah picked it up again. Flavor of Hongkew Park not as good as Public Garden.

Later came home and watched amah's younger sister wash and starch mamma's white kid gloves.

## THE DIARY OF A SHANGHAI BABY

---

May eighteenth (later).—Weather still good. Papa said he had to hurry at noon, as he and lawyer friend at club were going to look into important case that had just come up. Mamma asked him if important case had just come up from cellar. Quiet tiffin.

---

May nineteenth.—Bertie called this afternoon. Said he was sorry to have stayed away so long, but that he had sprained shoulder.

“Yes, I’ve heard she dances like that,” said with Cyril person.

Bertie pulled collar as face turned color of Jap baby’s felt hat. Then asked auntie why she went auntie with ice-box expression.

“There is nothing the matter with Cyril,” said auntie, tossing head. “He goes in the best society in Pootung.”

Bertie asked auntie what Cyril did for a living, and auntie said she wasn’t sure but thought he handled remittance department in some bank, as she had heard he was remittance man.

Bertie tried to hold auntie with arm and auntie said she would scream if he didn’t stop. Tried to help by squalling to call family. Bertie pulled

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

collar again and said he would have to go home. Went. Auntie said I was a pest and ought to be locked up in garret. Can't understand family. Guess I'll go to sleep with wooden elephant and make-believe chow.

## CHAPTER IX

*In Which the Baby is First Introduced to Mr. Henli Regatta. . . . Mamma Brings Happiness to the American Navy. . . . The Baby Goes on Spree at Theater and Mah-Jong Party. . . . Peanuts as an Infant Diet.*

MAY twentieth.—Too many clothes for weather. Wish amah would dress me like auntie. Had nap upstairs while coolie tried mamma's cold cream on complexion. Amah caught him. Told him he should be ashamed to take mamma's things and that anyway she had seen bottle first. Coolie came back later and took drink of mamma's florida water. Seemed very happy. Much Chinese music. Wish they'd let me have nap, as being baby in Shanghai is not easy job.

---

May twentieth.—Auntie excited at tiffin, as black cat had crossed path. Asked papa if he believed in signs. "Not in Shanghai," said papa. "I waited for fifteen minutes for a tram this morning at a place called a 'Request Stop.' Next time

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

I'll send my request in five days in advance and get the seal of the Minister of Communications in Peking."

Auntie said she didn't mean that kind of signs, but wanted to know if black cat had any connection with bad luck. Papa said it often did, as he had caught cook's cat drinking cream several times and it had always meant bad luck for the cat.

Mamma said that upstairs coolie had broken shaving mirror that morning, as he seemed excited and was working in hurry to go away to Chinese funeral. Papa said that if he wasn't more careful he would soon go to another one, only nobody would expect him to light joss sticks. No more conversation about coolie, as papa stopped to tell houseboy that though he was fond of soup, he didn't like it on collar bone.

---

May twentieth (later).—Went out for jaunt in perambulator with amah. Amah very good chauffeur. Pushes ricksha coolies out of way with conversation. Saw Jap baby in front of bath-house and hoped he would get lots of soap in mouth. Later passed auntie and girl friend, but was cut dead. Hate these social distinctions.

## THE DIARY OF A SHANGHAI BABY

---

May twenty-first.—Nice day. Auntie busy getting new clothes to wear Sunday when she goes to see somebody called Henli Regatta. Don't know Henli. Must be new friend. Auntie said all ready-made clothes she had tried on fitted like an Underwood typewriter cover on a Corona. Mamma told her she should be careful not to speak of typewriters, as it wouldn't do to let Shanghai people know that she had had job in office of coal and feed store at home.

"I've been introducing you as somebody with money, and you ought to help out in the impression," mamma said.

"Haven't I been trying to?" asked auntie. "I write all my letters on Astor House stationery and when I am at a tea, I always call up on the telephone to find out why my car hasn't come." Mamma remarked that when next girl said she couldn't bear to be dictated to auntie spilled beans by saying that she couldn't either, unless the boss spoke very slowly. Surprised to hear of auntie spilling beans, as had never seen her in kitchen.

---

May twenty-first (later).—Papa came home for afternoon. Mamma told him that if family was going to Tsingtao, he would have to go down

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

to American Consulate and get a passport.

"The trouble is that if I go to American Consulate, I'll also have to pay my income tax and I haven't seen anything coming in except shroffs," said papa. Mamma remarked that it would probably be pretty hard for papa to figure up his income, and papa said no, it wouldn't, as all he would have to do would be to add up what mamma had spent.

No more conversation for a while, but afterwards papa said that he would have to stay in town during part of summer and play tag with mosquitoes.

"I hope you'll promise not to take more than one cocktail at a time while we're away," mamma remarked. Papa said that would be easy, as he always found it awkward to lift two glasses at once.

"It will be rather hard to take the baby up to Tsingtao," said mamma.

"Why not put him in moth balls with the furs?" papa inquired.

No answer from mamma.

---

May twenty-first.—Couldn't go to Hongkew this afternoon as park is busy holding sailors.



## THE DIARY OF A SHANGHAI BABY

Mamma told papa that she was going to picnic and would bring enough food for five navy men. "You'd better hire half a dozen rickshas," said papa. "The cargo capacity of the American navy is the highest in the world." Mamma said she was taking macaroons and heartshaped sandwiches, also mint candies. Papa remarked that on that diet, the U. S. Navy would soon be in shape to win a push-ball contest from Montenegro. Mamma said that she hoped she would be asked to help decide male beauty contest, as she was a competent judge of handsome men.

"Yes," said papa. "You surely gave me a life sentence at hard labor."

Mamma told papa that he had wrong impression and had probably gotten it by shaving in front of auntie's picture of Douglas Fairbanks since coolie broke mirror.

---

May twenty-second.—Nobody home to-day. All gone to see Henli regatta. Family left in hurry this morning after auntie changed dress four times and complexion twice. Auntie said she had put on medium tint, and papa said that described it, as it was certainly neither rare nor

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

well done. Mamma remarked that she lets her color come and go, and papa answered yes, that it comes on in the morning and goes off at night.

Family went out at last and banged door, after auntie came back twice to put more powder on nose and once to put perfume behind ear. Heard papa say that it was a shame to waste two good bottles on pickles but mamma told him to stop talking and call a car.

"The kind of car this family is going to travel in passes the corner every five minutes without being called," said papa. Mamma said that he was as tight with his money as auntie's new shoes, but papa said that all he had left after buying railroad tickets was a dollar with copper filling and he was saving that for church.

---

May twenty-second.—Pleasant day. House-boy, cook, coolie, and relation having game on dining room table with family's mah-jong set. Amah trying on papa's silk socks left by houseboy. Amah's sister making self useful by sewing china buttons on papa's dress shirt. Upstairs coolie enjoying florida water. Will probably have to squall to get chow.

## THE DIARY OF A SHANGHAI BABY

May twenty-second.—Had exciting time this afternoon, as after mah-jong party everybody went to Chinese theater. Was taken by amah. Had interesting time trying to dodge hot towels thrown from aisles and empty water melon seeds falling from gallery. Music combination of cook stepping on cat's tail and houseboy breaking dishes. Had seed candy and two peanuts. Had to swallow peanuts all in one piece as found that new teeth don't hit.

## CHAPTER X

*In Which the Baby Hears Further Reports of Henli Regatta, Especially About Non-Washable Bathing Suits. . . . The Advantages of Bamboo Dragons Over Wooden Elephants. . . . Another Encounter with the Jap Baby.*

MAY twenty-third.—Nice day, but have funny feeling inside. Auntie busy putting talcum powder on sunburn. Said she saw Bertie at regatta and papa remarked that if he isn't careful they'll cancel his citizenship at the American Consulate for carrying a walking stick more than an inch in diameter.

Mamma asked papa if he was glad he went to the regatta and he said yes, that he held four aces once and had a full house several times.

"Is that all you got out of it?" asked mamma.

"Well," said papa, "I used to wish I could go back for a time and buy a ticket for the Ziegfeld Follies, but after seeing the bathing suits at Henli, I've ceased to be homesick. The tailors who made them must have stolen enough material to buy

## THE DIARY OF A SHANGHAI BABY

outfits for the whole family. Most of them were as short as the love letters of a man with a sprained arm."

Auntie said she liked regatta very much, but didn't see why they had people to row when there was a man at the back of the boat to pull it along with strings.

---

May twenty-fourth.—Not much doing to-day. Sat on floor during tiffin and heard mamma ask papa if he would have a mango.

"Do I eat it?" asked papa. "I always thought the mango was a dance."

"You probably also thought that the papaya was something to play on the ukelele," said mamma, with next-door girl expression.

Papa said that he might be ignorant, but at least he didn't tell lady from Japan that he hadn't gone to see the Diabutsu because he didn't like slumming. No answer from mamma.

---

May twenty-fourth (later).—Still quiet to-day. Had pleasant time eating colored spots off bamboo dragon that family bought at Henli. Tried to make it teach wooden elephant how to switch tail, but wooden elephant wouldn't learn. Will take

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

bamboo dragon to Hongkew Park this afternoon and try to throw scare into Jap baby.

---

May twenty-fifth.—Pleasant weather. Missed taking bamboo dragon to Hongkew Park, as papa played with it so much that he broke switch in tail. Hope he doesn't get interested in my bottle. Would like to keep a few things to myself if possible, as auntie has taken beauty pins and amah is using talcum powder for complexion.

---

May twenty-fifth (later).—Mamma busy getting ready for bridge party. Was fixing flowers when papa came home to tiffin.

"I've always heard that flowers in China don't smell," said mamma, sniffing caterpillar on leaf.

"They're lucky," said papa. "Sometimes I wish I couldn't."

Papa remarked that it was open season for onions on the Whangpoo and that fragrance was strong enough to win all events if only allowed in Far Eastern Olympic.

"The man who named the Garden Bridge must have had a bad cold," said papa.

"Maybe he was thinking of a vegetable garden," mamma answered.

## THE DIARY OF A SHANGHAI BABY

Papa said later that national air of China differed from that of other countries, as other countries expected people to stand up for national air, while that of China knocked people down.

---

May twenty-fifth.—Sat on floor during tiffin, and tried to make friends with wooden elephant again, which was unhappy because of bamboo dragon. Mamma said she was busy trying to figure out what to give for bridge prize, as she didn't want to spend money and yet wanted to be sure not to give anything she had won at house of some lady present.

"I think I'll pick out a couple of guest towels without initials," mamma said.

"Guest towels were built on the assumption that guests have only half a hand and no face," said papa. "I don't know why a person visiting is supposed to need a towel only one-sixth as big as he uses at home. I always take half a dozen and use them in relays."

Mamma said that size of guest towel didn't matter much, as stranger in bathroom always used family towels anyway and merely crumpled up guest towel for form.

Manicure amah came just then and mamma said

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

she was very glad, as she needed new supply of gossip to entertain company.

---

May twenty-sixth.—Had pleasant ride to Hongkew Park. Saw Jap baby and made face. Jap baby tried to turn up nose at me but couldn't as didn't have enough nose. Had interesting time watching bigger baby take walk in lake with gold-fish, while amahs were busy telling about missees' new dresses. Nice day.

---

May twenty-sixth (later).—Came back from ride and found family excited because papa missed light trousers from last year. Mamma said we might have key made for wardrobe, but auntie remarked that would be like locking barn door after stone had stopped gathering moss. Wonder if papa ever saw amah dressed up to visit family.

---

May twenty-sixth (later).—Papa asked mamma at tiffin if she had had good time at bridge party, and mamma said yes, that she heard three new scandals about ladies who went to Carlton with people not husband.

"There was some good bridge, too," said mamma.



## THE DIARY OF A SHANGHAI BABY

"Not as good as I play," said papa. "Last time I was in a game I made a grand slam by my playing."

"That was a pianola hand," mamma answered. "It played itself."

Papa said he didn't get credit for anything except refreshments bought at club, and even there they wouldn't give him beyond the first of the month.

---

May twenty-seventh.—Hongkew Park getting ready for something called Olympics. Wonder if they will enter any Jap babies. Would like to take part in wooden elephant-throwing contest.

---

May twenty-eighth.—Saturday and not much doing. Family went last night to hear lecture on something called relativity. Auntie said she had idea perfectly, only couldn't explain it. Mamma remarked that main idea was that everything is sometimes shorter than others, and papa said he was exception to law, as family kept him short all the time.

Mamma said she didn't believe so much ether was floating around, as it has an awful smell and everything would seem like hospital.

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

"Dr. Einstein must have gotten the idea that there is no absolute time by trying to set his watch according to the clocks along Nanking Road," papa said.

Auntie remarked that lecture was just too cute for words but next time she was going to movies.

---

Maytwenty-ninth.—Pleasantweather. Mamma asked papa to go to church in morning and papa said that last time he went, mamma took so long to get ready that they missed all the singing and just hit the collection.

"Nobody stylish goes to church on time in Shanghai, and a lot of people just leave cards," said mamma. "You needn't worry about the collection either, as all you have to do is sign a chit."

"Yes, but I hate to think of all those chits waiting for me in Heaven and being chased by shroffs with wings," papa answered.

Mamma said that if papa really expected to see chits in the Beyond he ought to write them on asbestos. No answer from papa, except prayer about razor.

---

May twenty-ninth.—Spent morning in basement

## THE DIARY OF A SHANGHAI BABY

while amah pressed clothes with iron having smokestack on top and told cook's wife about zoo in ancestry. Trouble because cook's wife said amah went to movies with cook. Cook very busy in pantry taking ice out of refrigerator to sell to step-uncle running sherbet stand.

---

May thirtieth.—Rainy day. Papa came back from Honkew Park and said that baseball game would have been great success if players were only allowed to use sampans. Fat lady called later with other lady just from America who is translating Chinese poems into English.

"You learned Chinese pretty quickly," said papa.

"Oh, I don't know any Chinese," said lady, swinging brown glass beads, "I just translate."

"I'm familiar with that type of work, as I've done a little of it myself," said papa. "Here is a fragment I translated from Li-Po:

'Oh laundryman, spreading wash in Hongkew,  
How the morning sun shines on sheets and pillow-cases!  
'Are you thinking of Confucius as you stand in the sunlight,  
Or are you merely wondering if family will miss those  
silk pajamas?'"

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

Poetry lady said poem was very unusual, and papa said it was not easy to write, as he had lots of trouble getting poetic license from Municipal Council. Papa then asked lady if he should recite another poem, but lady said she guessed she'd better be going.

---

May thirty-first.—Quiet day. Mamma told papa he ought to improve mind by going to meeting of Shanghai Psychic Research Society.

"It's all about spirits," said mamma.

"Will they teach me how to make home-brew in case I go back to the States?" asked Papa.

Mamma said it was not that kind of spirits, but the kind you see through.

Papa answered that in that case he didn't want to go, as he could do research work enough sitting in lobby of Palace Hotel and watching summer girls come in door.

## CHAPTER XI

*In Which the Baby Has a Brief Glimpse of the Far Eastern Olympics. . . . Economical Phases of the Dinner Dance. . . . The Battle of the Sukiaki House. . . . The Mosquito Massage an an Indoor Sport.*

JUNE first.—Nice morning. Sat on floor upstairs and watched coolie put up netting to keep mosquitoes from getting away from bed. Papa came home from Far Eastern Olympics in Hong-kew Park and said he hadn't seen so many kimonos outdoors since big hotel burned down in America.

"Was the track meet any good?" asked mamma.

"Yes," answered papa, "but I know a ricksha coolie that could beat any of them. The only trouble is that they wouldn't let him enter his ricksha and he wouldn't know how to run without it."

Mamma said track meet might be pretty good, but that she could see a better one by standing at corner of Nanking and Szechuen Roads and watching people cross street at noontime.

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

June second.—Not much doing to-day. Went to Hongkew Park, but sikh policeman said perambulator and its chauffeur would have to stay outside grounds. Heard noise inside like orphan asylum calling for bottles. Must have been chorus of Jap babies.

---

June third.—Nice day. Lady who is house hunting called at tiffin and mamma asked her if she had found a place.

“Yes,” said the lady. “We have the choice of sharing an attic room with two poodles or renting apartment for summer, provided we take over furniture and husband.”

Mamma told papa that family landlord had called and asked for two hundred taels a month, but papa said to tell him that he was no Rudyard Kipling and couldn't think up that many.

---

June fourth.—Rain. Auntie excited about man who had invited her to party at Carlton.

“His friends are very prominent,” said auntie, trying yellow georgette against sunburn.

“So are his ears,” said papa, looking up from pink sheet.

Auntie didn't say anything then, but remarked

## THE DIARY OF A SHANGHAI BABY

later that only trouble with dancing at Carlton was that nobody kept in step because they were all busy trying to see who everybody else was with.

---

June sixth.—Not much doing to-day. Boy busy putting moth balls in pockets of papa's winter suits and taking out change. Nothing left but coppers, as mamma had been there first. Papa said at tiffin that moth balls might keep moths away from clothes, but they also keep everybody else away after suits were resurrected in the fall. Also that for weeks afterwards, he found himself giving moth balls for fare in tram. Hope they don't put my wooden elephant in moth balls, as may cut more teeth during summer.

---

June sixth (later).—Mamma told papa that family had invitation to dinner dance for end of the week. Papa said dinner dance was great economy, as boy always put down soup or other course just before music began and then took it away during dance, before anybody had chance to damage it. Mamma told him he shouldn't try to sit out, as every time he did it, it meant that lady had to sit out too, but papa replied that he

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

was going to step on all ladies' toes early in evening so that they would be glad to let him eat dinner.

---

June ninth.—Weather pretty good. Also many mosquitoes. Mamma told papa that if he doesn't screen lower part of house pretty soon, she will have to eat dinner with feet in pillow case. "If you would only eat dinner with your head in a pillow case, I'd have more quiet in which to enjoy food," papa said. Mamma remarked that when he enjoyed food, nobody else had any quiet, didn't hear more as amah came in just then to give me bath with laundry soap.

---

June tenth.—Nice day. Auntie very excited. Said Bertie had almost proposed to her at Carlton, but was interrupted by having to go across room to see friend.

"He has a regular path worn around the Carlton from getting up to see friends when the Chinese boy brings in the arithmetic," said papa.

Auntie said papa didn't seem to know that Bertie was valuable office man and that he is an expert on the touch system.



## THE DIARY OF A SHANGHAI BABY

"I'll say he is," said papa, "He touched me for ten dollars once and it's still absent."

Mamma said she loved romance and asked auntie what Bertie had said. "He told me that he would cling to me as long as a ricksha coolie does to a straw hit," said auntie clasping hands and looking at fly on ceiling. Papa said that if auntie wanted to be certain, she would make Bertie promise to cling to her as long as he does to five-dollar bill.

---

June eleventh.—Rain. Sat on floor while papa dug dark clothes out of trunk and said things as he threw moth balls from pockets. Was put in crib later for nap and watched massage amah look through wardrobe while mamma's face was under hot towel. Later had interesting time downstairs as coolie beat carpets with papa's golf clubs. Might borrow golf club some day to try on Jap baby. Hope Jap papa won't object.

---

June twelfth.—Rain. Family sat in parlor during morning, after papa said he didn't want to go out, as was afraid of growing fins.

"The only time you ever went to church with-

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

out being driven was when we were married," said mamma.

"Yes, and look what happened to me then," papa answered.

Squalled then on account of having sat on price tag with pins, which auntie had thrown on floor, so mamma called amah to give me chow.

---

June twelfth (later).—Sat with family again in parlor after nap. Auntie busy with snapshots taken on houseboat trip, pasting them in album. Said she didn't know whether or not to put in one of girls wading, as her features didn't show up very good.

"Don't worry about that," said papa, picking up snapshot. "Nobody will waste any time looking at your features."

Auntie told papa that she never did take a very good picture in the sunlight.

"The only way you could ever take a good picture would be to go into the Louvre and walk off with Mona Lisa or something," papa said.

No answer from auntie, who was busy pasting in view of men and girls who had changed hats.

---

June fourteenth.—Family excited because of

## THE DIARY OF A SHANGHAI BABY

red spots on my face. Mamma said I was getting measles. Nobody seemed to notice that auntie had looped back mosquito net on crib with ribbon so as to make room look better when girl friends called. Squalled last night, but family didn't tumble. Jiggled wooden elephant in front of me to keep me quiet. Wonder what will happen to-night.

---

June fifteenth.—All rest of family have same kind of measles. Papa asked auntie what she was lighting when he came home from office.

"It's punk," said auntie, lighting another stick.

"I'll tell the world it is," said papa, sniffing air. "Why don't you put it out?"

Auntie said purpose was to knock out mosquitoes under table and papa remarked that if it burned very long, mosquitoes under table would have to move over and make room for him.

"For the next few months, all Shanghai girls will walk like a fly wiping its feet after stepping on mucilage," papa said. "Anybody who wants to make himself popular ought to get up a dance with that step in it."

Mamma said custom of withdrawing after dinner at parties was very convenient in summer, as it gave ladies chance to massage bites.

## CHAPTER XII

*In Which the Baby is Introduced to the Fly Season. . . . The Clothes Soviet in Shanghai. . . . Papa plays with Funny Round Things at Party . . . . The Baby Just Misses Being Handed Over to Amateurs.*

JUNE sixteenth.—Still raining. Auntie worried because Bertie was likely to be sent home on business trip.

"You have a right to worry," said papa. "The hardest working vamps in the world are the ones on the Pacific steamers. They can steal any man on the boat not under lock and key. If Cleopatra crossed with Mark Antony, she'd probably have to spend her evenings in the salon playing dominoes with a missionary, while Mark held down the deck with some blonde going to Manila."

Mamma said it was too bad some company didn't insure girls against loss of beaux who crossed ocean, but papa said there wouldn't be any money in it for firm, as risks were too great.

"How do you happen to know all this?" mamma

## THE DIARY OF A SHANGHAI BABY

asked, with squint in eye, but papa said he had to be back to office early.

---

June seventeenth.—Weather very hot. Wish they would dress me with apron in front and string in back like Chinese babies, or in georgette shoulder straps like mamma. Mamma asked papa why he wore dark suit on warm day.

"Because I don't want to be arrested," said papa. "I've got a suit for every day in the week and this is it."

Mamma asked papa where all his summer clothes are, and papa said that some are with the amah and some are with the houseboy. Remarked later that he was sorry he had bought transparent raincoat, as chief job of raincoat is to cover up old clothes, but transparent ones spoiled bluff.

---

June eighteenth.—More rain. Hope it stops before Hongkew Park is washed away as have few more remarks to make to Jap baby.

---

June nineteenth.—Weather warm. Sat on floor in kitchen and watched coolie catch flies to put in new flytrap. When trap was crowded, coolie emptied it out of open window. Flies must have

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

liked trap as all came back. Flies also very fond of rubber on my bottle, but don't mind very much as amah always scares them away before giving it to me. Have swallowed only one so far.

---

June twentieth.—Rain. Mamma told papa she had been reading in paper about cutting trees down in Public Gardens.

"The baby spends so much time down there that he will miss them a lot," said mamma.

"Why?" asked papa. "Does the amah climb trees with him?"

Mamma told papa not to be any more foolish than he is naturally and said that everybody would miss the beautiful limbs.

"Oh, I don't know," said papa. "Just take a walk down the Bund during the typhoon season and you'll see more limbs than you can count."

Mamma told papa that she thought he had better come up to Tsingtao for August.

---

June twenty-first.—Weather a little better. Auntie busy pulling out eyebrows and making new ones with pencil. Said she didn't know what she would do about complexion in the hot weather,

## THE DIARY OF A SHANGHAI BABY

as powder always looked like wet flour and melted color showed so badly on shoulders of monkey jackets.

"I don't worry any about my complexion and lots of people are wild about me," papa said.

"You mean that lots of the people about you are wild," mamma answered.

Papa said that anyway his friends didn't spend all afternoon over cup of tea and two macaroons wondering how lady next door could afford sequin gown when husband was only Number 4 in office.

---

June twenty-second.—Not much doing to-day. Went calling with amah in house with Chinese baby. Amah gave the baby my bottle to try, but baby didn't like it. Then amah passed it to baby's sisters and brothers. Squalled, as thought I might need drink on the way home. Amah filled up rest of bottle with tea. Better than rubber mouthpiece with no connection, but not as good as regular chow.

---

June twenty-fourth.—Friday. Papa busy looking over clothes brought by washman.

"He must have a new customer," said papa.  
"Here is a shirt I never saw before."

## AUDACIOUS ANGLES ON CHINA

---

Papa said that laundered clothes in Shanghai are owned on a community basis and everybody wears them in turn.

"I saw one of my shirts on a Bubbling Well car to-day and another one almost ran over me on a motorcycle," papa remarked.

Glad my clothes are washed by amah, as would hate laundry to deal me Jap baby's kimono.

---

June twenty-fifth.—Interesting time. Papa came home with friends after mamma went out to tea party. Friends asked if mamma was likely to come back soon, and papa said no, not if she once gets to talking, and that coast was as clear as at American Club.

"Put a little snow on Fuji," said friend twirling round white thing into center of green cloth. Lots more talk I didn't understand. Heard papa say later that he was going to put auntie on the table, but didn't know how he could as she was still at tea party.

---

June twenty-fifth (later).—Crawled under couch and went to sleep, but woke up when boy said missee was coming. Somebody threw round



## THE DIARY OF A SHANGHAI BABY

things down under couch cover and somebody else pushed in bottles.

"We've been talking over some business," said papa, as mamma came in.

Thought I would surprise mamma. Crawled out with red round thing in my hand to give her but knocked over bottle while getting out.

"We've just had tea," said papa, looking nervous.

"I never heard it called that before," said mamma, picking up bottle and reading label.

Papa's friends said they would have to go on account of important date and papa remarked that he would see them to rickshas. Rickshas must have been a long way off, as papa is still out.

## CHAPTER XIII

JULY third.—Great excitement. Family going back to America. Papa says mamma will have lovely time breaking in Swede servant girl if any, and that she had better ask amah to draw diagram of safety pins in my attire. Auntie busy buying clothes for shipboard but papa said that if she is still as good a sailor as she was coming over, all she needs is nightdress.

Squalled all day, at hate idea of being dressed and brought up by amateurs. Heard mamma say she was going to give goldfish to amah. Wish I was a goldfish.

---

July fifth.—Family still busy packing. Auntie says Bertie has asked her to stay, but she says she will look at crowd on boat before deciding. Papa packing clothes in bird-cage, as mamma has taken up all room in trunk.

---

July seventh.—Family leaving. Tried to hide in closet, so as to be forgotten, but mamma found

## THE DIARY OF A SHANGHAI BABY

me when looking for lost handbag. Still squalling about losing amah.

---

July seventh (Final bulletin).—Great surprise. Amah coming with us. Passed Jap baby on way to steamer and threw chow bottle. Very happy. Wonder if being baby in America is any easier than in Shanghai.

## GLOSSARY

**Amah.**—The native woman servant who guides the destinies of foreign children in China, or serves as lady's maid. She is also the unprinted newspaper that keeps local gossip in circulation.

**Bund.**—The street skirting Shanghai's waterfront, on the Whangpoo River.

**Carlton.**—One of Shanghai's most popular dancing resorts.

**Chit.**—A bill signed in restaurants, cars or shops as a promise to pay: also a note carried by a coolie. The large number of coolies and the eccentricities of the telephone system make the chit a very popular method of communication.

**Chow.**—Anything to eat.

**Compradore.**—A Chinese who acts as intermediary between foreign business firms and Chinese buyers and sellers.

**Coolie.**—A servant of lower rank who usually does ninety per cent of the work in a household. Also a day laborer.

**Cumsha.**—The universal tip in a new verbal guise. Also applied to gifts and commissions.

**Godown.**—A warehouse.

**Griffin.**—A person who has lived in the Far East less than a year.

**Hongkew.**—The northern section of Shanghai.

**Houseboy.**—The major factotum in a Far Eastern household. He waits on table, answers the door-

## GLOSSARY

---

bell and telephone and usually directs the other servants.

**International Settlement.**—The section of Shanghai governed by a city council of British, Americans and Japanese.

**Kuruma.**—Japanese version of the ricksha.

**Mafoo.**—A Chinese coachman.

**Maskee.**—A popular pidgin English expression meaning "Never mind."

**Monkey-jacket.**—The short British mess-jacket which serves as summer evening dress in China.

**Nanking Road.**—Shanghai's principal business and shopping street. The term "Road" should not be taken as an indication of bucolic scenery.

**Pidgin.**—Work or business.

**Ricksha.**—One-seated, two-wheeled vehicle pulled by a coolie.

**Sampan.**—A small Chinese boat devoted to carrying merchandise and passengers. It usually serves as a residence for its owners.

**Samshui.**—A Chinese native rice wine greatly resembling the Japanese saké. Like saké, it is heated before drinking.

**Shroff.**—A Chinese bill collector employed to present signed chits on the first of every month and secure payment if possible.

**Soochow Creek.**—A tributary to the Whangpoo River, noted for its many sampans and ill-bred odors.

**Sukiaki or Sukiayaki.**—A form of Japanese stew cooked on the floor over a gas-plate or charcoal brazier, usually by the restaurant patrons them-

## GLOSSARY.

---

selves. Sukiaki parties are extremely popular among foreigners.

**Sycee.**—Chinese silver coin shaped like a shoe.

**Taipan.**—The foreign manager of a firm or office.

The social system in the East gives the taipan a large amount of prestige, regardless of his drawing-room qualifications.

**Tiffin.**—The meal which at home is known familiarly as "lunch" and formally as "luncheon."

**Woosung.**—A town on the Whangpoo River, fifteen miles from Shanghai.







